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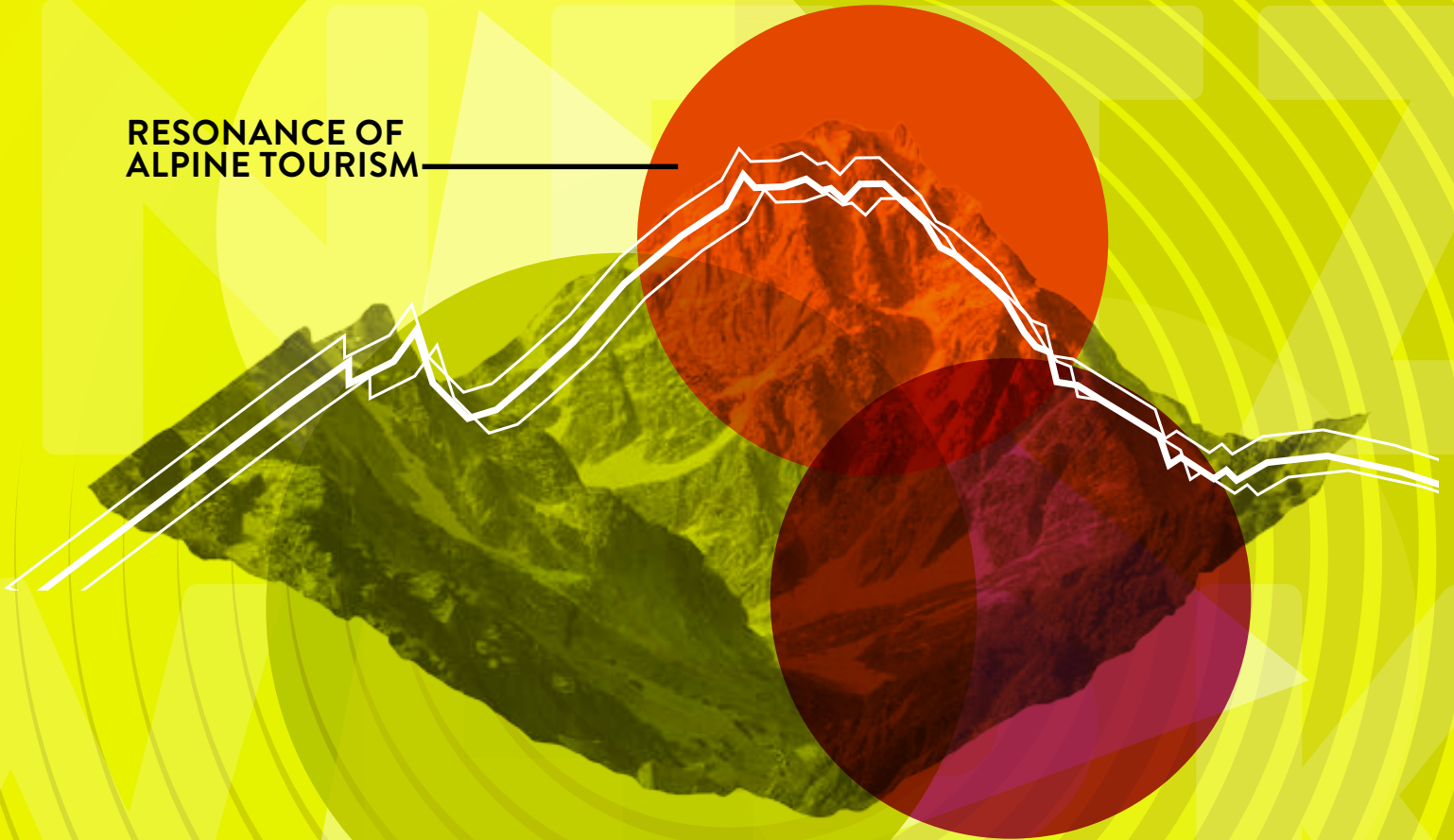
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The industry takes off! © Pixabay

THE SKI INDUSTRY IS HEALTHY!

With more than 366 million skier visits, ski season 2023/24 demonstrated for the third time in a row that the ski industry is healthy. This is the result of the 2025 International Report on Snow & Mountain Tourism – read more on [page 6](#). And the current season also seems to have turned out to be a good one. The final figures are not yet available, but the initial reports from Europe and the USA are encouraging.



Gerald Pichlmair
Publisher

Lots of input in this issue

The omens for the two major industry events INTERALPIN and NSAA are therefore good. I am pleased to provide you with an editorial trade fair guide in this issue. Among other things, you will read about innovations and examples of best practice in cable cars, snowmaking, piste grooming and analogue-digital attractions. We also report on the situation of ski resorts in the German-speaking Alpine region and show what

ski resorts can learn from amusement parks. An interview on the World Ski Championships in Saalbach, a report on the de-icing of cable cars and an analysis of the (non-)cooperation between Google Maps and the ski resorts round off this issue.

Mountain Summit 2025

Last but not least, I would like to recommend the Mountain Summit event to you: From September 17 to 19, 2025, around 150 professionals will gather in Oberstdorf (Germany) to exchange expertise and insights.

Mountain Summit gives companies the chance to collaborate with clients on industry topics, showcase solutions, and build personal connections. Key entrepreneurs from the alpine tourism and ski resort industries will share their experiences and discover the latest trends to help grow their businesses. Join us!

INDUSTRY-IMPORTANT DATES

[May, 06th – 09th, 2025](#)

Interalpin,
Innsbruck (AT)

[May, 07th, 2025](#)

OITAF-Seminar,
Innsbruck (AT)

[May, 11th – 14th, 2025](#)

National Convention & Tradeshow,
Marco Island (USA)

[May, 21th – 22th, 2025](#)

IFT Ropedays,
Stuttgart (GER)

[June, 16th – 18th, 2025](#)

Downhill Bike Park Summit,
Killington Resort (VT, USA)

[September, 17th – 19th, 2025](#)

Mountain Summit 2025,
Oberstdorf-Kleinwalsertal (GER)

[September, 23th – 26th, 2025](#)

Mountain Technology Symposium,
Camelback Resort (PA, USA)

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With the gondola to biking fun

With the Bike Cab for gondola lifts, up to eight bikes can be transported at the same time. This guarantees a high transport capacity and attractiveness for cycling enthusiasts. Loading and unloading is quick and easy. The bikers hang their bikes in the Bike Cab at the bottom station and then take the next cabin. At the top station guests have enough time to remove their sports equipment again - off they go into the biking fun.

WINTER SEASON 2023/24: SKI INDUSTRY IS HEALTHY AFTER COVID-19

To this conclusion came the authors of the 17th edition of the International Report on Snow & Mountain Tourism by Laurent Vanat. The data shows that ski resorts are far from the end of the story – often predicted by mainstream media – and are consolidating after the pandemic.

According to the new International Report 2025, last season's results were promising, giving hope for the 2024/25 season as well. With more than 366 million skier visits, ski season 2023/24 demonstrated for the third time in a row that the ski industry is still able to perform. The average worldwide visitation to ski resorts for the three post-covid-19 years is even higher than average visitation of pre-covid-19 years of the current century. Winter 2023/24 was indeed again a business as usual season. The 2023/24 ski season showed mixed results across countries, largely influenced by weather and snow conditions. While China led the recovery, surpassing its pre-COVID five-year average, other strong performers included the United States, Italy, Scandinavia, and Russia. However, France and Austria have yet to fully recover, and Japan and Germany experienced historically low visitation levels. Overall, the season was a near zero-sum game, with gains in some regions offset by losses in others.



© Pixabay

Highlights of the 2023/24 season

- Ski business demonstrates a strong resilience to climate change;
- Even if in limited numbers, there are still new ski resorts appearing throughout the world;
- It is still possible to realise all time visitation records in mature markets such as Italy and Chile, which made their best ever season;
- China has resumed its growing path with a new record season;
- International skiers' flows are subject to unexpected changes;
- Geopolitical issues may have increased influence on the ski business in the future;
- Industry consolidation stabilised;
- The digitalisation still does not deliver easy access to the slopes and poorly contributes to customer journey improvement.

Ski resorts against climate change

Although climate change obviously impacts the operation of ski resorts, it seems at this stage not to have a substantial impact on global visitation. Ski resorts are embracing anticipation by actively preparing for climate change by improving snow management, reducing carbon footprints, and investing in sustainability. The US ski areas focus on optimizing snowmaking and resource use, while French resorts aim for carbon neutrality by 2037, with innovations in hydrogen-powered grooming and eco-friendly practices. Advanced climate modelling, like CLIMBS NOW in France and similar projects in Switzerland, helps resorts plan for future snow conditions and adapt infrastructure. These efforts will ensure the industry's resilience and long-term sustainability.

Emerging destinations

There are currently 68 countries in the world that offer equipped outdoor ski areas covered with snow. Even if snowfields are much more numerous, about 2.000 ski resorts have been identified worldwide. Besides the major ski destinations in terms of skier visits, there are a number of other, smaller destinations, where skiing has been an industry for a long time, or is currently developing. The most obvious emerging destinations are Eastern Europe and China, but there are a number of other small players spread out across the globe: Cyprus, Greece, India, Iran, Israel, Lebanon, Lesotho, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Turkey and many more.

vanat.ch

SKI WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS SAALBACH: SUMMARY OF THE SKI RESORT IN AUSTRIA

The 13 days of the FIS Alpine Ski World Championships in Saalbach-Hinterglemm were preceded by 13 years of preparation. The enormous efforts of the Hinterglemm ski resort have paid off. Its director, Peter Mitterer, emphasizes that a rich harvest is expected in the coming years.

SI World: From February 4 to 16, 2025, the FIS Alpine Ski World Championships took place in Saalbach. In your view, what were the biggest challenges of this mega-event?

Peter Mitterer: The preparation time is extremely long. It already started in 2012. For example, when the cable car "Zwölferkogelbahn" was rebuilt in 2018/2019, the requirements for the World Championships were already taken into account. Major hurdles included the approval processes for slope improvements and additional snowmaking systems.

How great was the additional effort that the ski resort companies had to bear?

Enormous. The additional snowmaking costs amount to around 2.5 million euros. The extra preparation expenses can be estimated at around 400,000 euros. On top of that, there are 330,000 euros for additional snow guns and modifications to the Zwölferkogelbahn for the World Championships, amounting to approximately 1.5 million euros.

Is there a tangible benefit from these investments for individual skiers?

The base snowmaking on the mountain "Zwölferkogel" can now be completed more quickly. Because of this and the five additional snow groomers, we can ensure consistently outstanding slope quality. Our goal is for Saalbach to enter the World



Peter Mitterer
Director of Hinterglemm ski resort



Cup circuit with speed races. We have shown the world how to organize a World Championship, which is why we hope to host World Cup races in the future.

How does the new Zwölferkogel Nordbahn fit into the World Championships concept?

We replaced the previous lift from 1989 with a 10-passenger gondola lift identical to the Zwölferkogelbahn, offering high transport capacity (2,600 people per hour). The new lift played a crucial role during the World Championships.

The idea was to concentrate all the events on one mountain, where ski guests could also enjoy uninterrupted skiing alongside the races. Did this approach work?

Our concept of "One Mountain - All Events" worked perfectly. The distances are short, and the transport logistics are ideal. The Zwölferkogel has excellently fulfilled its role of bringing together elite sports and recreational skiing. We were also able to transport our guests to the mountain on race days.

Ski guests could watch the races from the slopes without needing a separate ticket. What was the feedback on this?

Very positive. On one hand, it was possible to watch along the race slopes.



On the other hand, there were several public viewing areas (middle station, Breitfußalm, Winkleralm). For example, at the middle station, 4,000 to 5,000 skiers were watching live.

To ensure that skiers from Fieberbrunn/Leogang could reach the Zwölferkogel in time for the races, operations were started earlier. How well did this work?

It worked perfectly. In Fieberbrunn alone, there were an average of 2,500 more initial entries on race days. These were skiers who came to watch the races on the Zwölferkogel.

Additionally, there were fans who traveled to the valley "Glemmtal" specifically for the races. How did you manage this influx?

Those who arrived by public transport got off the bus at the terminal in Hinterglemm and walked the final 900 meters along the fan mile to the race area. This worked very well, too.

If another World Championship were to take place soon, what would you do differently?

Nothing, because our overall concept was very well received by athletes, officials, and guests.

Interview: Oliver Pichler

CURRENT SITUATION *in Europe*



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More than six years have passed since PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) conducted a comprehensive study on the cable car industry in Austria and Switzerland. Which predictions have come true – and which have not? Roland Schegg from PwC Switzerland answers in the SI interview.



SI World: *How do you assess the economic situation of the German-speaking cable car industry?*

Roland Schegg: In my view, the situation varies by region. Some “flagship destinations” are doing very well. In some cases, local structures are even showing signs of overheating due to the sheer volume. On the other hand, there are areas that have to work intensively on the market to reach target occupancy rates. Weather plays a central and increasingly unpredictable role in both summer and winter. If extreme weather events, like those in Valais this summer, occur, even large destinations face challenges. This results in uncertainty and economic risks. For businesses with investment cycles of 20 years or more, this can become financially demanding, especially when investments are planned or required.



To what extent are we already seeing market consolidation in ski areas across Germany, Austria, and Switzerland?

In some cases, a clear transformation is evident. Increasingly, there is a question of whether the capital-intensive ski tourism model can (or should) be maintained in its current form. Smaller and even medium-

sized areas need to seriously consider how they can remain profitable in the future. A thorough, strategically sound analysis of the market and existing structures is essential. Snow reliability is another key issue. Here too, the question arises as to which investments remain viable in the long run and what sustainable financing could look like. Ultimately, sustainable free cash flow is needed to pay off debts – over a period that often extends beyond 20 years. Assessing this is challenging.



What challenges do small and medium-sized cable car operators face? What about the larger ones?

Smaller and medium-sized areas operate with lower volumes simply due to their size. A clear focus is essential, which can lead to good margins. However, this requires using available resources very carefully. Strict differentiation and targeted priorities are necessary, particularly in deciding what to forgo. Those who try to keep up with the comprehensive offerings of larger areas can quickly find themselves in financial trouble. Large areas benefit from volume advantages, but even here, services and investments must be carefully evaluated. After all, volume must be sustained in the market over time, and volume does not automatically translate into margin for a business or region.



How have business models changed since your 2018 study, and what lies ahead?

I see mixed developments. Some areas have changed, while others continue on the same path. The summer business has certainly gained importance. Various offerings, such as trail running, are now being used to better utilize existing infrastructure year-round. Targeting the right customer segments is key. Depending on the strategy, different areas are taking different approaches. Looking ahead, it will be even more crucial to determine what drives margins and value creation for a given region.



Has the industry-wide digitalization standard predicted in 2018 been established?

The development has certainly progressed, but the path forward remains goal-oriented. I doubt that highly integrated (and digital) business models, like those in North America, are the right approach for the German-speaking Alps. In my view, the focus should be on a federated integration, meaning that individual service providers remain independent and agile. At the same time, a region should present itself as a unified entity in the market – also digitally. True federalism means that only those tasks

Graphics: Flaticon



Roland Schegg
PwC | Director | Consulting
Family business, SMEs & public



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that cannot be handled effectively by individual players are tackled collectively. This federated approach combines the advantages of both large and small-scale structures.



Customer focus over cable car technology: Has this shift in mindset taken place?

I'm not sure whether this shift has truly occurred. I still see investment projects that I don't fully understand – but I don't need to. What is clear is that banks have become much more critical when financing projects. As a result, loan applications now require much more solid economic justification. This makes the process more demanding for applicants but is a positive development overall. A financial "stress test" using comprehensive financial simulations (potentially in different scenarios) can greatly support this process.



What role does an integrated service offering play in the cable car industry today?

This refers to offering specific guest segments a tailored vacation package. I am convinced that this is a key lever for effective market engagement. Significant progress has been made in areas such as skiing, snowshoeing, winter and mountain hiking, long-distance hiking, biking, and most recently, trail running.



To what extent are medium-sized cable car operators shifting toward a reduced core offering?

I don't think these approaches necessarily conflict. It's more about intentional

Where does the industry stand? That depends on who you ask, says Roland Schegg from PwC.

market differentiation – essentially, defining what a region stands for in winter and summer. Depending on the size, it makes sense (and is necessary) to tailor the offering based on available resources and target groups.



How important are partnerships in the cable car industry? How can they be successful?

Partnerships reflect the federalist principle. In international market positioning, it's important to consider who can help create a stronger presence. Additionally, collaborations can be beneficial in digital solutions, IT, infrastructure, or procurement processes. However, partnerships only work if there is mutual trust and understanding among participants. Minimizing interface losses is particularly important.



What challenges and opportunities does the alpine tourism and industry face?

Overall, increasing uncertainty and declining stability are expected. Over the long term, financial risks will rise, especially for long-term investments. This means businesses must think tactically within flexible scenarios. Weather and climate dependence is just one factor. Strategically, targeted differentiation is crucial to effectively reach the right market.

To mitigate fluctuations in different segments, offerings and target groups should not be too narrowly focused. Investments must be strictly limited to a scale that makes operational sense, as financing must often be repaid over long periods. Digitalization helps reach markets, but the core product will remain "analog."

Mergers and ski area connections could help achieve critical scale. However, the key question is determining the optimal size for sustainable management. In mergers, it is crucial that cooperation remains balanced, even between differently sized partners. The interplay between "large" and "small" can be interesting – guests often seek coziness in smaller settings but prefer a comprehensive experience in larger ones.



How do you assess the entry of North American resorts into the European market?

This indicates that the European market is attractive and has a future. Established competitors are now forced to adapt to changing market conditions. This could accelerate ongoing transformation processes. However, the key question is whether Anglo-American business models – whether in management, regional engagement, or market approach – will actually work in the German-speaking Alpine region.

Interview: Thomas Surrer



At an inclined length of 8,631 feet, Madison 8 now holds a record as the world's longest eight-place chairlift installation. © DOPPELMAYR

DOPPELMAYR GROUP: WORLD'S LONGEST 8-SEATER CHAIRLIFT

With a length of 2,619 meters, the Big Sky Resort in North America recently opened the world's longest 8-seater chairlift. The installation from DOPPELMAYR impresses with its functions.

The new "Madison 8" chairlift at the US ski resort of Big Sky offers guests a truly comfortable experience: it is equipped with extra-wide, heated seats, individual head and footrests and bubbles. In addition, the safety bars lower automatically after boarding and lock, while they open again automatically at the top station.

Another useful feature: the height of the boarding platform can be manually adjusted by the lift staff to make boarding easier and safer for children as soon as guests reach the access area. The chairs are automatically stored in the top and bottom stations overnight at the simple press of a button. This function facilitates maintenance and protects the lift equipment from extreme weather conditions.

The new ropeway is equipped with a FATZER Performa-DT rope, a significant advancement in rope technology that better dampens noise and vibrations and promises less maintenance over time. The "Madison 8" replaces the former Six Shooter lift on the Moonlight Basin side of the ski area. This installation makes Big Sky Resort the first North American ski resort with two 8-seater chairlifts and three D-Line chairlifts from manufacturer DOPPELMAYR.

"Since Big Sky 2025 was announced nine years ago, we've had an ambition to create North America's most technologically advanced lift network," said Troy **Nedved**, the resort's president and COO. "Madison 8, our twelfth new lift installed since 2016, certainly makes this a reality." *ts*



TECHNICAL DATA:

Madison 8 (Big Sky Resort, USA)

Capacity	2,770 P/h (+ 50%)
Inclined length	2,619 m
Height difference	563 m
Travel speed	6 m/s
Travel time	8 min (- 30%)
Chairs	80
Towers	25



"This lift is a significant investment from Lone Mountain Land Company and Big Sky Resort" – Matt Kidd, president of LMLC.



Madison 8 is equipped with extra-wide heated seats and individual headrests and footrests. © DOPPELMAYR



New modules are constantly being added to the clair maintenance software. © DOPPELMAYR

DOPPELMAYR CLAIR: NOW SUPPORTS PLANNING

Well planned is half done: With new extensions to the clair maintenance software, cable car manufacturer DOPPELMAYR is now also simplifying the planning of inspections.

As a digital assistant, *clair* from DOPPELMAYR supports the operation and maintenance of cable car installations for a better overview, meaningful automation and high data security. With the new modules, customers now have additional helpful tools at their fingertips. The *clair* software provides a perfect overview of all installations and systems on the mountain or in urban areas. Whether cable cars, snow groomers, snowmaking systems or operating buildings,

everything can be displayed and networked across manufacturer boundaries.

New tool in the toolbox

clair supports the management of operating and maintenance tasks in the resort. Operators are relieved of the burden of managing cable cars, machinery and vehicle fleets as well as building management. Everything in one place – anytime, anywhere. Since September 2024, *clair* has had a planning

tool that further improves the range of functions. In the spirit of “well planned is half done”, users get an overview of upcoming maintenance tasks at the touch of a button. And the next functional enhancement is already on the horizon. *clair* will be equipped with a professional component management system to support the planning, execution and monitoring of revisions. This year’s INTERALPIN will provide the first insights and outlooks. This will make planning the next revision a breeze. ts

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100 YEARS OF KISSLING AG: REVOLUTION WITH GEARS

Since 1925, KISSLING AG has been developing, producing, and maintaining gears across a variety of industries. In doing so, its ropeway division has emerged as the most important segment. Why do so many alpine and urban cable car operators trust the Swiss company?

Developing gears further, but also completely rethinking them – this is the claim that KISSLING AG has been articulating for years in its slogan “Revolution with gears”. This year, the Swiss company is celebrating its 100th anniversary. Headquartered in Bachenbülach near Zürich, the company can look back on an eventful history. Values such as precision, quality, innovation, and customer focus helped it navigate crises and reach new heights. An overview.

1925–1934: The beginnings in Seebach

In 1925, everything began with the company “A. Glutz & Co.”, which manufactured gears and resistance welding machines. In the 1930s – during the Great Depression – the company shrank significantly, but Glutz persevered. Leander **Kissling**, then head of the Regensdorf division of Robert Aebi AG, recognized the potential of industrial gears, especially step-shift gears. When the economic situation at Aebi worsened, Kissling joined A. Glutz & Co. as a partner in 1934.

1934–1943: “Glutz Gears” as an innovative brand

Kissling brought fresh energy into the company. Within four months, he developed series of gears for planetary gears and spur gears as well as step-shift gears. These were particularly successful during the crisis period, as many workshops converted their belt drives to single drives. From 1938 onward, the company introduced standardized gear ratios, which improved both prices and delivery times. These innovations made “Glutz Gears” well known throughout Switzerland.

1943–1980: KISSLING AG as a player in the ropeway industry

In 1943, Leander Kissling took over the company and renamed it “L. Kissling & Co.”. Under his leadership, new technologies such as case-hardened and flank-ground gears were introduced. KISSLING became one of the first companies in Europe to produce such gears on a series basis. The 1950s and 1960s brought rapid growth. New types of gears and custom designs were developed, including gears for ski lifts and ropeways. Success in this area led to strong demand, making ropeway



The bestseller since 2017:
The SKP ropeway gear.
© KISSLING

gears an important revenue driver. In 1980, the company was converted into a corporation and the share capital was distributed within the family.

1981–1999: POMA supplier, software lab – and the crisis

The 1980s and 1990s were marked by both growth and challenges. KISSLING became the exclusive supplier for POMA, a leading ropeway manufacturer, and introduced innovative software solutions such as *KISSsoft*, which was later spun off as an independent company. A prolonged recession put KISSLING AG in a challenging economic position. It was only toward the end of the 1990s that the company managed to get back on track through a successful turnaround. During this time, the Kissling family made a groundbreaking decision: the production of gears and shafts was outsourced to selected third-party manufacturers who met the high quality standards of KISSLING AG. This strategic realignment proved to be one of the best ideas in a long time, laying the foundation for sustainable recovery and future growth.

2000s: Amusement parks, the US market, and ASTRO

After successful restructurings, the company recovered and got back on a growth path. Yet, new economic challenges continually demanded flexibility and courage to maintain its market position.

The quality and reliability of KISSLING gears found new applications. Renowned amusement parks worldwide chose KISSLING products to offer their guests safe and smooth experiences. Expansion into North America was driven by a collaboration with ARTEC. With a strong partner by its side,

MARTIN KISSLING

CEO and owner KISSLING AG

“The history of KISSLING AG shows how innovation, adaptability, and the determination to overcome difficult times can shape a company. From humble beginnings to becoming an internationally recognized name in gear technology – KISSLING AG is a prime example of Swiss engineering excellence and entrepreneurial spirit.”



KISSLING established itself in this market and reached new customer segments. In 2006, KISSLING introduced the *ASTRO* gears – a groundbreaking development specifically designed for high precision and load-bearing capacity, further strengthening the company’s technological edge. In 2009, the next important step was taken with the move to Bachenbülach. At the new location, the foundation for further growth was laid, featuring modern infrastructure and expanded production capacities.

2012–2015: New structure, new gears

Since 2012, Martin **Kissling** has been the sole owner of KISSLING AG. Under his leadership, strategic decisions were made to modernize the company’s structure and increase process efficiency. The development of new products, such as the successful *Sirius* series, and the opening of additional markets were central to his strategy. Martin Kissling placed particular emphasis on enhancing customer focus and the company’s innovative capabilities. His approach enabled KISSLING AG to position itself as a reliable and forward-looking partner in a highly competitive market.

An example is the *Wega490*, launched in 2013. With this product, KISSLING brought a double-conical planetary gear to the market that is distinguished by its high rotational speed of 10,000 rpm and is used in various high-tech applications. In 2014, the *Sirius-CS 125* followed immediately. The star planetary gear set new standards in gear technology with 400 kW at 20,000 rpm and once again demonstrated the strength of KISSLING in demanding applications.

2015–2021: New certifications, new products, new partners

In 2016, KISSLING received the environmental certification ISO 14001 and the occupational safety certification OHSAS 18001. These awards underscored the company’s commitment to sustainability and safe working conditions. In 2017, a significant year for the ropeway industry, KISSLING developed the new, compact, and small *SKP* ropeway gears, opening up new possibilities in ropeway technology and impressing mountain lift operators with innovative solutions. In other sectors too, much was happening: in 2018, KISSLING presented a new concept for turbo gears, specifically developed for test benches, achieving an impressive 65,000 rpm.

Finally, in 2019, KISSLING secured a significant partner in the USA with LONE WOLF. This step marked another milestone in the company’s internationalization and significantly strengthened KISSLING’s presence in the North American market.

In 2020, the *SKP* ropeway gears were successfully introduced in China, resulting in sales of over one million Swiss francs and underpinning KISSLING’s international success. Collaboration with CRYOSTAR marked another major success in 2021, with KISSLING being recognized as a key supplier and further strengthening its position in strategic partnerships.

2022–Today: Closer to the market, end customer in focus

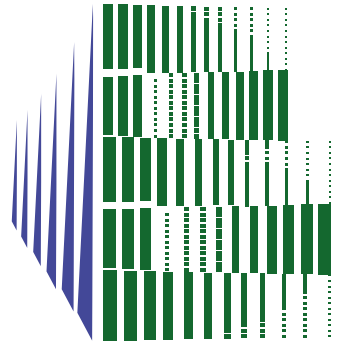
From 2022 to 2024, KISSLING implemented a new strategy aimed at being even closer to the market and the needs of its customers. The focus was on increased direct cooperation with end customers in order to better understand specific requirements and develop tailor-made solutions. Many more on-site customer meetings were held to nurture personal relationships and respond more quickly to individual wishes. This strategy not only enhanced customer satisfaction but also increased market share in various sectors.


With the development of the *Sirius CS-175*, KISSLING once again set technological benchmarks. This gear achieves an impressive output of 1.4 MW and demonstrates the company’s innovative strength. During the years 2022 to 2024, the *Sirius* series was further developed to establish a strong second pillar for the company. Building on the success of the *Sirius CS-175* with its 1.4 MW output, KISSLING invested in new technologies and improved production processes to make the *Sirius* series even more versatile and powerful. In keeping with the motto: develop gears further, but also completely rethink them. Or as KISSLING puts it: “**Re**volution with gears!”

ROMAN SIEGFRIED

Head of Sales & Marketing KISSLING AG

“Since 2012, Martin Kissling has been the sole owner of KISSLING AG. With his visionary approach, he brought fresh momentum to our company and initiated a comprehensive restructuring that continues to play a key role in its success today. With foresight and a strong focus on growth and quality, he continues to set new impulses that shape and strengthen the company sustainably.”

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To ease congestion in the sacred city, BARTHOLET is building India's first urban cable car system. With 148 cabins gliding above the streets, this Swiss-engineered solution is set to transform everyday transport for locals, pilgrims, and tourists.



The construction of India's first urban cable car is advancing, with the first test rides having taken place. © BARTHOLET

By 2026, BARTHOLET will build India's first urban cable car in the city of Varanasi, which has a population of 1.5 million and is one of the holiest places in Hinduism. To relieve the city from heavy traffic and the large number of pilgrims and tourists heading to more than 2,000 temples, the cable car will operate 16 hours a day, running from the main train station – a major transport hub – to the temple district at Godowlia Chowk.

In 2023, a delegation from India visited Flums, Switzerland, to see the quality of BARTHOLET's technology for themselves. The Swiss company has extensive global experience building cable cars and is now bringing its forward-looking solutions to Varanasi, the spiritual capital of India.

Construction in progress: First test rides

The L-shaped route will consist of two sections with five interconnected stations. Since the groundbreaking in September 2023, construction has been progressing rapidly. Cable splicing for

the first section – from Varanasi Cantt main station, through Vidya Peeth station, to Yatra station – has already been completed, and first test rides have taken place. At the same time, the towers for the second section are being installed, which will extend the line to the temple area of Godowlia Chowk. Once completed, the cable car system will stretch 3,660 meters and serve one of the city's busiest routes. A total of 148 modern 10-passenger panoramic cabins, designed by the Porsche Design Studio,

will run on 29 towers with heights ranging from 7 to 46 meters. The system will be able to transport up to 3,000 passengers per hour.

Less traffic, more ecological

By building India's first urban cable car, Varanasi is making a move toward a more sustainable future for urban mobility and is actively addressing the city's current challenges. Ever-increasing traffic narrow streets, and millions of pilgrims make fast travel nearly impossible.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

10-Person gondola lift, Varanasi, Section 1 + 2:

<i>Length</i>	2,290 m
<i>Capacity</i>	3,000 p/h
<i>Travel speed</i>	6 m/s
<i>Motor power</i>	560 kW
<i>Number of cabins</i>	90
<i>Number of towers</i>	18

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

10-Person gondola lift, Varanasi, Section 3 + 4:

<i>Length</i>	1,440 m
<i>Capacity</i>	3,000 p/h
<i>Travel speed</i>	6 m/s
<i>Motor power</i>	415 kW
<i>Number of cabins</i>	58
<i>Number of towers</i>	11

Cost-effectiveness as a key factor

The cable car has proven to be a smart addition to the existing public transport system. Unlike trams or subways, the cable car doesn't require extensive infrastructure on the ground and can be integrated into the urban landscape without major changes.

Floating above city traffic, it allows efficient passenger transport without adding to congestion. The continuous loop system, with short wait times and high capacity, is especially well-suited for urban environments. Cost-effectiveness was also a key factor. The Indian government chose the cable car because it is more affordable than other public transport options and can be implemented more quickly.

Example for other cities

This new transport system will not only ease traffic but also show how innovative cable car technology can make cities more efficient, eco-friendly, and livable. With this step into the "third dimension" of public transport, India is setting an example that could inspire other cities in the world's most populous country. The project is being implemented under a Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM), with the concessionaire Vishwa Samudra Ropeways set to take over operations once the system is up and running. The opening is scheduled for 2026.

bartholet.swiss



The full opening of the first cable car in Varanasi is planned for 2026. © BARTHOLET



The cable car with five stations extends over 3,660 meters. © BARTHOLET




The cabins were developed in collaboration with the Studio F. A. Porsche. © BARTHOLET


TOOLS FOR HEROES

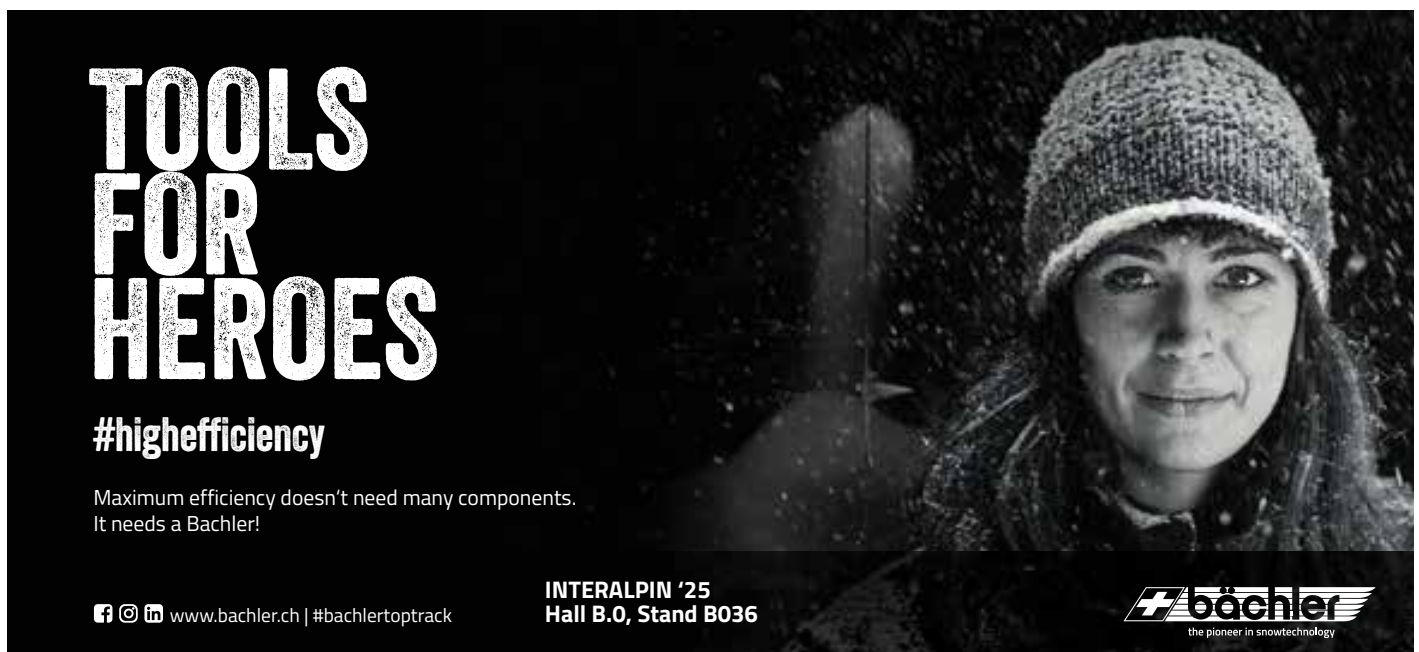
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PISTENBULLY: PARK FLEET IS COMPLETE

With the launch of the *PistenBully 100 ParkPro* at the LAAX Open 2025, KÄSSBOHRER's park portfolio is now complete: The models *PistenBully 100*, *400*, and *600 Polar* are now all suitable for building jumps, halfpipes, and more. An overview of the vehicles.

The *PistenBully 400 ParkPro* has been an indispensable part of building snow parks for quite some time. The new generation of this model was presented in 2022 – with a new look and for the first time with its intuitive operating concept, numerous assistance systems and many optimizations. Then in 2024, the *PistenBully 600 Polar ParkPro* entered the spotlight. It pushes, cuts and shapes in large snow parks with impressive power and efficiency.

Now the *PistenBully 100 ParkPro* is rounding out the lower range: Due to its smaller dimensions, it is suited especially well for building terrain parks and family parks. But even outside of parks, these models are an absolute win.



All good things come in threes: The Park-Pro series from PistenBully. © KÄSSBOHRER



© SI/Pichtmair



© KÄSSBOHRER



© KÄSSBOHRER

PistenBully 400 ParkPro

– the familiar face in snow park building

It grew up as the *PistenBully 400 Park* back in the 1990s when the parks came into being – and to this day it has remained the unbeatable professional tool in this segment. In close collaboration with the professional shapers of the world, it was continuously developed and optimized accordingly to their needs. It is and remains the standard for creativity and perfection in parks. By balancing the relationship between power and weight, it guarantees excellent maneuverability. Its newest highlight: now it also comes in a winch version with *Active Winch*, which enables automatic steering assistance by the winch and optimum steering properties even in difficult slope conditions and with a lateral tensile load.

PistenBully 600 Polar ParkPro

– power and control in park building

With its pushing performance and optimum power-to-weight ratio, the *PistenBully 600 Polar ParkPro* quickly became established in the arena of freestyle and snow parks. Thanks to *NoDeck* (the deliberate removal of the loading platform), it also offers an unobstructed view of the tiller and tiller shaft – for faster, easier and safer work. It is the first choice for moving large quantities of snow, creating “archetypes” or building really huge jumps. The greater freedom of movement of the park auxiliary equipment in front and back make it suitable for a variety of uses. With patented functions such as *AutoTracer*, *SlopeTracer* and the optional *SNOWsat* or *SNOWsat LiDAR* system, it sets new standards in the industry.

PistenBully 100 ParkPro

– new possibilities in snow park building

The smaller dimensions of *PistenBully 100 ParkPro* make it the most maneuverable *PistenBully* for snow park building, so it is the compact solution for smaller parks and fun slopes as well as challenging terrain adjustments. The new 3.2 m *ProFlexTiller* opens up limitless creative possibilities with its active control of the tiller angles up to $\pm 7^\circ$. It can effortlessly shape a wide variety of park features and other unique attractions, such as steep curves, thanks to its ability to adapt to the surface. Whether kids' slope style, fun line, indoor fun or toboggan run – the *PistenBully 100 ParkPro* masters every challenge. By having a compact design and the highest power in its class, it saves not only snow and space, but also costs.



Davide Penzo presented the PistenBully park fleet to the B2B media. © SI/Pichlmair



ProBlade with many features. © KÄSSBOHRER



NoDeck version for visibility. © KÄSSBOHRER



ProFlex Cutter for many occasions. © SI



It's easy to steer with the stick. © KÄSSBOHRER

Tools of the park fleet

All three park versions excel due to their innovative features, which make them professional tools in snow park building:

ProBlade:

ProBlade with *SideCutter* and *One-Touch-Straight* function makes everything even sharper: This technology makes it possible to groom the snow with precision, provides for ideal cutting edges of the "wall" and models kickers with even greater finesse. The *One-Touch-Straight* function sets the blade straight at the push of a button, without limiting the forward or backward movement of the side wings. This has a positive effect on the snow flow (the snow intake and discharge) out of the blade. Now it can be tilted backward for better snow transport. With the *PistenBully 400* and *600 ParkPro*, integrated hydraulic transport tines are the solution for moving park equipment.

ProMount swap system:

Strong cylinders, high-performance proportional hydraulics, streamlined steel construction with modified kinematics: These all enable the *ProMount* swap system to master wide-ranging terrain requirements – even outside of the park – precisely, quickly and powerfully. And they increase the versatility of the machines.

The even greater movement radii make for more flexibility of the attachments. All of the implements can be operated simultaneously. Ideal for shaping and reshaping kickers and ramps, jumps and pipes – and now with the *PistenBully 100 ParkPro*, there are no more limits even in the terrain park!

ProFlexTiller:

With almost double the flex angle and active control of the V/A position, this tiller offers optimum adaptation to the

slope conditions and thus extraordinary possibilities for designing obstacles and terrain features: The *Freeze* function not only allows operators to approach any end or intermediate tiller position actively but also to map each and every contour. The existing ground contour is traced (recorded) in a floating position and then locked hydraulically. Now with the *PistenBully 100 ParkPro* this also opens up new possibilities for fun slopes in the form of banked turns and other attractions.

"By introducing the *PistenBully 100 ParkPro*, we are completing our park fleet," says Alexander **Dehm**, Sales Manager at *PistenBully*. "This model is not only ideal for building terrain parks and family parks, but is also increasingly in demand in normal use for grooming slopes and cross-country ski trails. The larger movement radii offer numerous new possibilities even outside of parks."

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QR code and play button icon.



The tiller can be uncoupled in seconds with the KFX. © KÄSSBOHRER

KFX BY KÄSSBOHRER: SAVES TIME AND MONEY

With the unique KFX fast exchange system from KÄSSBOHRER for the rapid attachment and removal of rear attachments in under 30 seconds, an exceptionally efficient, flexible and targeted use of the PistenBully with or without a tiller is possible.

Quick coupling and uncoupling of the tiller without leaving the vehicle: The unique KFX fast exchange system from KÄSSBOHRER enables rear attachments to be mounted or removed in less than 30 seconds, allowing the *PistenBully* to be used with maximum efficiency, flexibility, and precision, either with or without a tiller. That's how hundreds of hours and up to 20 percent fuel can be saved over the course of a season. This is because the tool-free coupling and uncoupling of the tiller – without leaving the vehicle – not only ensures greater efficiency, but also cost savings, convenience and greater safety.

Minimizing operating costs

The reasons for this development are obvious: saving time and fuel saves money. Coupling and uncoupling in a matter of seconds reduces labor costs and reduces the weight of the vehicle by 1,200 kg and thus fuel consumption. Thanks to KFX, you are also much more spontaneous and can dismantle the tiller more easily and more often when it is not needed.



Caleb Miller, Director of Slope Maintenance in Mammoth: "The KFX is a great system that you should definitely have. Super simple and fast. It saves us a lot of time."

Working without a tiller also reduces the load on the main frame and implement carrier as well as the risk of expensive collision damage and makes maneuvering easier in tight situations. The result: less damage and wear and tear and therefore additional savings on maintenance costs. The lower weight also gives the driver more thrust and climbing power, for example when approaching the anchor point. Without the additional weight of the tiller, pushing in the slope is also more efficient. If necessary, the tiller can be re-coupled in just a few seconds, the KFX locks securely and automatically, and preparation can begin.

Test also passed in the USA

The intensive test phase is now over – and all the stumbling blocks have been eliminated. A number of test customers in the European Alps used the system and provided insightful information on how to optimize the KFX. In January, the big performance took place at Palisades Tahoe Ski Resort in California, USA. During the demonstration, the many



The system for quick mounting and dismounting of the tiller in less than 30 seconds – without leaving the vehicle – enables efficient, flexible and targeted use of the tiller.

customers in attendance were able to test the functionality of the device in detail. Then it was straight on to Mammoth Mountain – for a very special job: the lift exit at "Chair 23".

When it gets tight, it has to go

There is not much space at the top of this lift for maneuvering and backloading – almost impossible with the attached tiller. It has to be disconnected and reconnected every time. In the past, this was a complex, manual process that required tools, knowledge of hydraulic hoses and a lot of time. Caleb Miller, Director of Slope Maintenance at Mammoth, explained before using the KFX: "When we have to disconnect the tiller, it always takes about 10-12 minutes." Once all the hydraulic hoses and pivot bolts have been disconnected, it then takes another 10-12 minutes to reconnect them after use. That's why he was very confident from the outset "that using KFX would save us a lot of time."

And indeed, Caleb was able to complete the lift exit in record time, leaving his tiller outside the building while he worked. In hindsight, Caleb was even more impressed with *PistenBully's* innovative snow groomer. This is because the drivers can now quickly and easily remove and reattach the tiller without having to leave the *PistenBully* cab. This simplification drastically reduces the time and effort required – to less than 30 seconds. "The KFX has made the work at the top of Chair 23 incredibly quicker," he reports. And all this for both winch and solo vehicles.

AUTO TRACER: STEERING ASSISTANCE

The AutoTracer from KÄSSBOHRER is increasingly ensuring efficiency and safety in slope maintenance. The innovative assistance system supports PistenBully operators with steering.



left as well as to the right. This makes it possible to drive effortlessly, even on challenging terrain.

Stay cool on the slope

In addition, the *AutoTracer's* inverse position provides automatic counter-steering on lateral slopes. For example, if

the operator turns right to go up a lateral slope, the tiller automatically swings out to the left. This function actively provides the operator with support to keep the machine stable and avoid hazardous situations. This intelligent steering assistance not only increases safety, but also reduces fatigue of the operator.

Assistance systems have become such a matter of course in our daily lives that we don't even realize anymore just how much easier they make things. Take power steering, for example: If it happens to fail or you are using your muscles to steer a classic car, only then do you realize its value! It is no different for the *AutoTracer* on a tiller with intelligent, active steering assistance: This is an indispensable solution for all operators of snow groomers who value efficiency, safety and driving comfort.

Stay flexible!

The tiller itself basically enables two settings: If it is in the locked position, the finisher wipes away the beautiful corduroy pattern as you drive through a curve. If in the floating position, it follows behind the machine like a trailer – and the grooves remain intact. As you drive on slopes, however, the grade resistance can result in a critical situation – then the tiller is always in danger of drifting off and wiping away the corduroy pattern. This is where the *AutoTracer* makes its grand entrance! It also has two settings: When in the locked position (rigid), the system ensures precise control and stability, whereas the floating position (flexible) allows for smooth adaptation to the terrain. This versatility is particularly important on uneven terrain, where flexibility and optimum adaptation to the slope conditions are critical.

Sharp curves always under control

One outstanding feature of the *AutoTracer* is the automatic and independent steering support for cornering. The system automatically detects the steering angle given by the operator and adjusts the steering of the tiller accordingly – to the

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© BÄCHLER

The 4-stage SnoTek TRINITY TRIDUSA, here with a quick-change system, delivers high snow removal performance with maximum area coverage.

TOOLS FOR HEROES FROM BÄCHLER: FOR THOSE WHO PREPARE PERFECT SNOW

To mark the 50th anniversary of INTERALPIN 2025, the Swiss lance expert has launched its new campaign, **TOOLS FOR HEROES**, putting snowmakers in the spotlight. Despite the cold, they create perfect slopes. BÄCHLER, in turn, helps them work more comfortably and efficiently.

“No compromises”, high efficiency, swissness and retrofit – these are the core principles that define BÄCHLER’s approach. How these principles are applied and how clients benefit from them – read on.

No compromises

By „no compromises“, BÄCHLER understands the use of the required energy relative to the amount of snow produced per snowmaking point. Just a few years ago, this was impossible, but BÄCHLER has managed to increase the water flow to such an extent that, even at lower temperatures, comparable or, depending on the nozzle size, even higher snow output than that of traditional low-pressure snow guns is achieved. The *SnoTek TRINITY TRIDUSA*, launched last year, currently represents the pinnacle of BÄCHLER’s “no compromises” approach. It delivers identical snow output in the critical temperature range as the *SnoTek TRACK TRIDUSA*, but with additional performance at lower temperatures. The *TRINITY* three-head version, with maximum nozzle configuration, achieves a water flow of 852

l/min, producing up to 115 m³ of snow per hour. With just 2.5 kW of energy required in central air operation and over four snow stages, BÄCHLER proves that no compromises are needed when it comes to performance and flexibility.

High efficiency

Since its inception, BÄCHLER has pursued the approach of maximum efficiency. The core technology of the snow lance allows snow to be produced with significantly less energy consumption. However, BÄCHLER has also proven that this does not result in reduced snow output. Additionally, the large area coverage, especially with the two- and three-head models, plays a crucial role. Maximum efficiency is achieved, as less distribution work is required for the piste vehicles, and also due to the location and material use per snowmaking point. In 2011, BÄCHLER ushered in the two-head era with the *NESSy MEDUSA*. In 2017, the *SnoTek TRACK TRIDUSA* followed with three snow heads. Not only is it characteristic of the instantly recognizable BÄCHLER snow

lance, but according to BÄCHLER, this technology continues to deliver an unparalleled amount of snow in the critical temperature range.

Swissness

According to its own statements, BÄCHLER achieves an in-house production rate of over 80 percent. Wouldn’t it be easier to source the individual components? Three main factors speak in favor of BÄCHLER’s high level of in-house production: Swiss Made is a globally recognized quality seal. However, BÄCHLER not only wants to benefit from this reputation but also live up to it. This is achieved through the second important factor, their very high quality standards. According to BÄCHLER, these can be better ensured through in-house production. Finally, flexibility is another advantage of this approach. Special customer requests or feedback from the field can be directly incorporated into production when needed. BÄCHLER can only secure these benefits through extensive in-house responsibility in manufacturing.



SnoTek V1 6D MEDUSA lance head as a retrofit replacement on an existing Sufag Taurus system.

Retrofit

Efficient, uncompromising, and extremely sustainable – this is how BÄCHLER's retrofit division presents itself. The ability to make existing and aging systems future-proof through a simple head replacement is a hallmark of BÄCHLER's innovation. To further strengthen this area, a snow head specifically focused on retrofit has been developed. Based on the widely tested *NESSy* core technology, the *SnoTek V1 6D* series was introduced. V1 stands for "only" one snow stage, and 6D refers to the six SnoTek water nozzles. Starting from a wet bulb temperature of -3.0° , a single head of the *SnoTek V1 6D* produces up to 18 m^3 per hour. As is almost expected from BÄCHLER, this snow head is also available in two- or even three-head configurations. The *SnoTek V1 6D TRIDUSA*, for example, delivers up to $53 \text{ m}^3/\text{h}$ with just a head replacement, for instance, from older Gemini models or other third-party manufacturers. While not entirely comparable to full BÄCHLER snow lances, the energy and air volume

requirements differ. Even BÄCHLER can't turn everything upside down. However, the strong demand in the past season has shown that there is a significant need in ski resorts for the long-term use of snowmaking systems and the associated financial savings. Retrofit is possible not only with the *SnoTek V1 6D*, but with all BÄCHLER snow heads. A wide range of adapters is available for almost all common third-party manufacturers.

Meet BÄCHLER at INTERALPIN

At the upcoming InterAlpin, BÄCHLER will be at the usual location, B036 in Hall B.0. The BÄCHLER team is excited to welcome friends from all over the world to their booth.



Three-head snow lance SnoTek TRACK TRIDUSA with its distinctive appearance.

© BÄCHLER



10-seater gondola lift | Altaussee | Austria | Design by Studio F. A. Porsche
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Skiline turns every ski day into a personalized winter story.

SKILINE: DIGITAL STORYTELLING FOR THE SLOPES

In a world where outdoor sports meet digital innovation, Skiline is setting new standards in how winter adventures are experienced, tracked, remembered, and shared. Developed by ALTUROS Destinations, this pioneering platform is already used by 6 million users across 350+ ski resorts.

With just a ski pass number, guests gain access to a personal digital experience: vertical meters, lift rides, kilometers skied, ski days, and more – presented in a clear, interactive dashboard via the *Skiline* App or web portal. *Skiline* turns every ski day into a personalized winter story.

But it's not just about data – *Skiline* brings the mountain to life through rich media content. One of its most exciting integrations is *Skimovie*, a video-based highlight that transforms guests into the stars of their own alpine adventure. Combined, *Skiline* and *Skimovie* create an ecosystem where every ski run becomes a shareable memory – blending

performance, fun, and digital storytelling into one seamless guest journey.

Skimovie: A game-changer that turns your resort into a sensation

Among *Skiline's* most impactful innovations, *Skimovie* revolutionizes ski resorts by offering a fully automated video attraction that brings the excitement of ski racing to all guests, regardless of skill level. Using FIS-style timing and multi-angle cameras, it captures every detail of a skier's run, from turns to jumps. The footage is automatically edited into a high-quality video and shared via the *Skiline* App within minutes, allowing skiers to relive, download and share their personalized highlight with friends and family on social media.

Skimovie is also a valuable tool for video analysis, making it ideal for race programs and training. The professional film material supports performance checks and technique improvement and offers practical added value for competition participants.

With over a decade of experience and more than 120 installations across ski resorts in Europe, *Skimovie* has firmly established itself as one of the most engaging, trusted, and scalable entertainment solutions in the alpine tourism market. Resorts report impressive results: up to 150,000 videos produced per season, boosting guest satisfaction, encouraging return visits, and driving a continuous stream of organic brand exposure through user-generated content.

From a business perspective, *Skimovie* opens exciting new avenues for monetization and branding. Resorts can offer exclusive private races, sell premium access or digital downloads, and unlock sponsorship opportunities – from branded race tracks onsite to customized video overlays. The result: added value for partners, enhanced visibility for resorts, and unforgettable experiences for guests. Best of all, the system operates with minimal staff involvement. It's fully automated, seamlessly integrated into existing resort

WATCH SKIMOVIE IN ACTION

Visit the website alturos.com for more info, videos and product details:





Skimovie revolutionizes ski resorts by offering a fully automated video attraction that brings the excitement of ski racing to all guests. © ALTUROS

infrastructure, and easy to maintain – making it a low-effort, high-impact upgrade to your mountain experience.

Now, looking ahead to the Winter 2025/26 season, ski destinations in North America have the exclusive opportunity to be among the first in the US and Canada to adopt this proven European success story. Early adopters will not only gain a powerful competitive edge but also position themselves as leaders in digital innovation within the mountain tourism space.

Phototrap & Photoprint: Unlocking the full monetization potential

Phototrap & Photoprint extend *Skiline's* monetization power far beyond traditional skiing. Designed for year-round use, the system captures high-quality action shots in motion, while the *Photoprint Terminal* enables instant purchase,

sharing, or printing on-site. This opens new, highly scalable monetization channels for resorts looking to expand and maximize earnings per guest – even outside the traditional winter season. Whether it's tubing, ziplines, alpine coasters, or summer toboggan runs, *Phototrap* delivers automated, high-impact photo moments. Guests love the ability to take home a physical or digital memory, while resorts benefit from increased revenue per visitor and

valuable organic marketing through social sharing.

ALTUROS Destinations: Building the digital future of tourism

ALTUROS Destinations is a leading technology provider offering innovative digital solutions for the tourism industry. With the mission to build digital marketplaces for tourism, ALTUROS helps ski resorts, destinations, and transport providers create connected, data-driven guest experiences throughout the entire customer journey.

Its modular platform, *DestinationOS*, integrates sales, CRM, ticketing, and content management into one system, enabling destinations to streamline operations, unlock new revenue opportunities, and provide seamless service from the first click to the last chairlift.

WATCH PHOTOPRINT IN ACTION

Watch the Video on YouTube about Phototrap and Photoprint: shorturl.at/q3zHk



CONNECT WITH ALTUROS

Company: Alturos Destinations
Founded: 2002
Headquarter: Pfäffikon, Switzerland
Core Focus: Digital solutions for tourism and destination management
Market Reach: Global, with strong presence in the Alps

Contact: Stefan Winter
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Meet Alturos at the next tradeshow:
Interalp 2025 (Innsbruck, AT) – booth A10a
NSAA National Convention and Tradeshow 2025 (Marco Island, FL) – booth 508

The Photoprint Terminal enables instant purchase, sharing, or printing on-site.





INTERALPIN 2025 will once again present innovative cable car technologies that will shape the future of alpine mobility. © Überall

INTERALPIN 2025: 50 YEARS OF LEADING THE WAY

After intensive preparations, the time has finally come again: the global ropeway and alpine technology industry is looking forward to a reunion at INTERALPIN 2025. The 25th edition of the world's leading trade fair for alpine technologies will take place at Messe Innsbruck, May 6–9.

Planning is in full swing

For the 50th anniversary, visitors can expect a top-class range and programme with the latest innovations and pioneering industry trends. The key players in the industry have announced the presentation of eagerly awaited world firsts. Around 650 exhibitors from more than 50 countries will present pioneering technologies, including digitalisation solutions, automation, smart access systems for ski resorts and sustainable snowmaking and slope grooming technologies. The trade fair offers an exclusive platform for companies to present their products to an international trade audience.

Highlights 2025:

Expert knowledge and networking

In addition to the latest technological developments, INTERALPIN offers an exclusive platform for knowledge exchange and networking between experts. The INTERALPIN Inspiration Days on 7 and 8 May 2025 are a central

highlight: top-class keynotes, specialist presentations and panel discussions will shed light on the top topics in ropeway and alpine technology. Renowned conferences and specialist events at INTERALPIN emphasise the importance of the trade fair as an international platform for innovation and networking.

On the opening day, 6 May, the Austrian Cable Car Conference will take place under the theme "Strategy 2040 - The Future of Skiing". In high-calibre specialist presentations, experts will discuss the future of winter sports, potentials and risks as well as the reinvention of alpine skiing by snowfluencers. The General Assembly of the International Organisation of the Ropeway Industry (OITAF) and the associated technical seminar will take place on 7 May. Entitled "Artificial intelligence: Is the world of ropeways facing a structural upheaval?", the seminar will be dedicated to imparting specialist knowledge about the basics and innovations associated with AI.

Urban mobility:

"City Cable Car Solutions"

In addition to alpine technologies, INTERALPIN 2025 is also dedicated to urban cable car solutions.

Cities around the world are facing the challenge of coping with growing traffic volumes in an efficient and environmentally friendly way. Ropeways offer a promising solution: they are environmentally friendly, space-saving, cost-efficient and can be easily integrated into existing infrastructures.

In densely built-up or topographically challenging areas in particular, cable cars prove to be a useful complement to buses and trains. Thanks to their high transport capacity and short construction times, they are becoming increasingly important internationally.

With "City Cable Car Solutions", the trade fair presents best-practice examples and insights into the role of cable cars in urban transport as well as keynote speeches and panel discussions as part of the INSPIRATION DAYS.

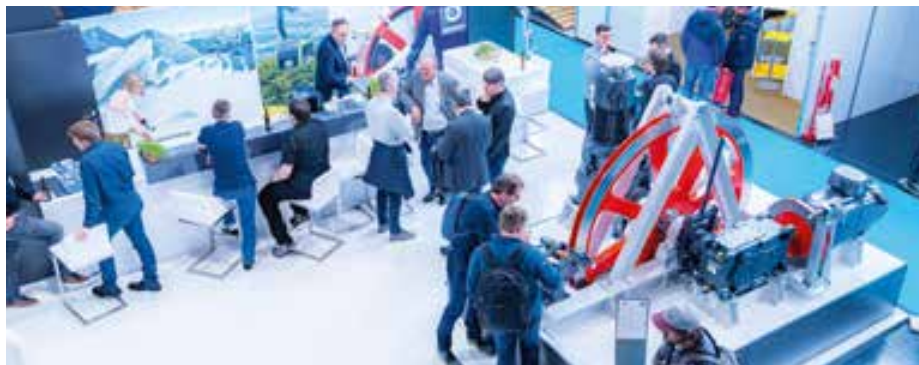
Premiere of INAC 2025

The first Inter-Alpine Natural Hazards Conference (INAC) will take place parallel to INTERALPIN from 5 to 7 May 2025. The new conference, organised by Congress Messe Innsbruck (CMI), the Federal Research Centre for Forests (BFW) and the Austrian Torrent and Avalanche Control Association (WLV), is dedicated to forecasting, prevention and management of alpine natural hazards. The aim is to create a platform for European experts, institutions and companies to develop solutions for protection concepts by linking industry and science.

A must-attend event for the industry

INTERALPIN 2025 is more than just a trade fair - it is a place for exchange and a driving force for the future of the Alpine technology industry. Its role as a showcase for innovation and an industry platform, its global reach and the high quality of the trade visitors as well as the top-class supporting programme make INTERALPIN an indispensable meeting place for experts from all over the world.

For more information visit
www.interalpin.eu



The exhibitors present innovations at INTERALPIN. © Überall



INTERALPIN 2025 provides exclusive networking opportunities. © Congress Messe Innsbruck

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STAGING: WHAT SKI RESORTS CAN LEARN FROM AMUSEMENT PARKS

Ski resort Consultant Lukas Melzer talks about the relationship between staging and attractions, visitor management in the mountains – and what ski resorts can learn from amusement parks.

SI World: *Staging and attraction are both concepts that play a role in the development of ski resort offerings. How do they relate to each other?*

Lukas Melzer: Everything that attracts visitors is an attraction. This can be purely natural, such as a summit, a cave, or a special view, or man-made, ranging from playgrounds and events to extensive themed experiences. Staging enhances the attraction. The attraction remains the central experience, while staging makes it more emotional, exciting, and unique – it literally “sets the stage” for it.

In what ways can ski resorts stage their offerings?

Staging starts with something as simple as a bench at a viewpoint or large photo frames directing guests’ gaze toward the mountain panorama. A growing trend from the USA and France involves lighting installations. With spotlights, lights, or even laser and drone shows, even simple mountain forests can be turned into paid attractions – although environmental protection sets limits here. Digital staging is also on the rise, such as virtual reality headsets or augmented reality applications being tested in the mountains. However, I remain skeptical about purely digital offerings. The natural experience remains the priority.



Lukas Melzer
Tourism Consultant
MONTENIUS CONSULT



With the Aérolyve gondola in La Plagne (France), guests can stage themselves. © JNJ Photos

What guests want, likely depends on the target audience, right?

That’s partially true. If my destination is known for peace and nature, I won’t be hosting loud shows – that’s clear. However, there are universal elements in experience design. The experiential principles developed by Walt Disney nearly 100 years ago serve as a great guideline. Key success factors include: the sensation of speed without personal effort, an abundance of food and drink, the dream of a paradise garden, sun and water, guests’ self-staging, as well as curiosity and entertainment. These elements tap into deeply ingrained evolutionary needs.

Which Disney elements are already widely implemented in the ski resort industry?

The sensation of speed without effort is a fundamental part of skiing. Interestingly, Disney conceptualized ski resorts decades before opening his first theme park. The cable car experience itself can also be enhanced – for example, with special cabins like open-air gondolas.

Quality mountain gastronomy has also become standard. And the dream of a paradise garden is naturally given in our industry – the mountains, the panorama, the flora, and fauna. However, we must maintain this: messy ski racks in summer disrupt people’s aesthetic perception and diminish the mountain experience. Inconsistencies in staging should be avoided at all costs. This was a key principle for Disney, leading him to open his own “perfect” world in 1955.

Where is there room for improvement in the remaining three elements?

The themes of sun and water have enormous potential. Think of expanded summer use of reservoirs, the installation of water attractions, or aligning gastronomy and high-traffic areas with the sun’s position.

Opportunities for guests to stage themselves could also be further developed. A great example is the Aérolyve in La Plagne, France – an open cable car cabin where guests are secured with climbing harnesses and can take spectacular selfies. But it doesn’t have to



Lighting installations – like the Flumserberg Galaxy in Switzerland – are on the rise. © Bergbahnen Flumserberg

be that elaborate: Just as coaster rides include snapshot stations, zipline rides could feature action camera videos – creating additional revenue for operators.

Curiosity and entertainment also offer room for growth, although the industry already hosts great events and shows. A strong example is the eagle shows in the Zillertal, Austria. Theme parks use shows strategically to manage queues for top attractions. That comes to mind when I see long lines at summer toboggan runs – there’s more that could be done beyond simply installing sunshades.

Everything in Disneyland is centralized in one place. To what extent does this apply to ski resorts?

In winter, this is naturally limited by skiing, but the sport itself carries the experience. In summer, additional attractions are much more in demand. The goal is for guests to stay longer and generate more revenue – ideally for a full day. There are cases where summit restaurant revenues drop because guests hike away immediately after reaching the top. That’s why infrastructure clusters are emerging, combining stations, restaurants, playgrounds, and more.



The eagle shows in the Zillertal (Austria) correspond to Disney’s show element. © Frank Bauer

Spatial planning should be considered even more strategically. At the same time, spreading visitors across a wider area can enhance their experience, reducing congestion on slopes or in restaurants. Here, theme parks set an example. They’ve used information screens displaying wait times for years to guide visitors.

Theme parks are known for their numerous shops. Should ski resorts follow suit?

That depends on the location. If I have many Asian or American visitors, it can work well. In other places, it’s more of a complementary offer. A clear regional or even local focus helps differentiate from mass-market products.

What are the key success factors for good attractions and their staging?

Either you focus on a unique selling point – which is often the right approach for smaller ski resorts – or you offer guests a package of experiences for a full day, which is more suitable for larger ski resorts. It’s crucial that attractions require no prior knowledge or skill – think

“instant fun.” In general, having a single financial entity managing all attractions is beneficial, following the resort model of theme parks. In terms of pricing, ski resorts, especially in Europe, often undervalue themselves – another lesson to take from theme parks. It’s also clear that guest expectations are rising, and the intervals for new investments are becoming shorter.

What role does storytelling play?

A good story is the cherry on top. A consistent theme is valuable – from mascots and station designs to an overarching narrative for the entire destination. But let’s be clear: no one comes just for a story. The offering has to be compelling!

Interview: Thomas Surrer

SIX DISNEY ELEMENTS

1. Speed without personal effort
2. Abundance of food and drink
3. The dream of a paradise garden
4. Sun and water
5. Self-staging of guests
6. Curiosity and entertainment



The Alpspitzsplash in Nesselwang (Germany) turns the reservoir into an attraction. © Faszinatour

GOOGLE MAPS REMOVED SKI LIFTS AND SLOPES

The popular navigation system often misleads guests in the mountains – closed roads become part of the route, and open paths are marked as closed. What's more, Google recently stopped displaying cable cars and ski slopes. Why is this, and what can ski resorts do about it?

It's almost a routine for every driver: open Google Maps, enter the destination, start navigation – and let it guide you with ease. Unfortunately, it doesn't always go smoothly.

A road to nowhere

The Pfingstegg station is located about 1,400 meters above Grindelwald and is a popular spot for relaxation in Switzerland. Visitors can either hike there or take the cable car. However, for a long time, drivers tried to reach it via a narrow and bumpy road – because that's what the GPS suggested. The route didn't actually lead to the summit, but ended halfway up, simply because the road didn't go any further. It took years, countless error reports to Google, and a lot of frustration – for the cable car company, guests, locals, and authorities – before the error was fixed. What exactly prompted Google to correct the route remains unclear.

Expensive mistake

Here's another – opposite – story: For several years, Google Maps incorrectly indicated that the access road to the

Swiss ski resort Mörlialp in the canton of Obwalden was closed. According to the media platform Blick, the ski resort management feared that many guests would never even attempt to reach Mörlialp. It took about three years to bring this issue to Google's attention. The business owner can only guess at the financial losses caused by this mistake.

First – invisible lifts...

The problem with outdated information about ski resorts on Google Maps is much bigger. Although Google started marking ski lifts and color-coding slopes in 2013, winter sports enthusiasts and residents of alpine regions have constantly complained that the information was either not updated at all or updated with significant delays. Often, only the lower station of the cable car is marked on the map, but the full route is not visible. As a result, guests who rely on this service cannot see exactly where they are heading. "Even in Hintertgletscher, not a single lift is marked, even though the ski world looks right at the Zwölferkogel. Apparently, ski resorts aren't that important on a global scale. At least not for Google Maps," complains Markus Redl, CEO of ecoplus Alpin GmbH in Lower Austria, on LinkedIn.

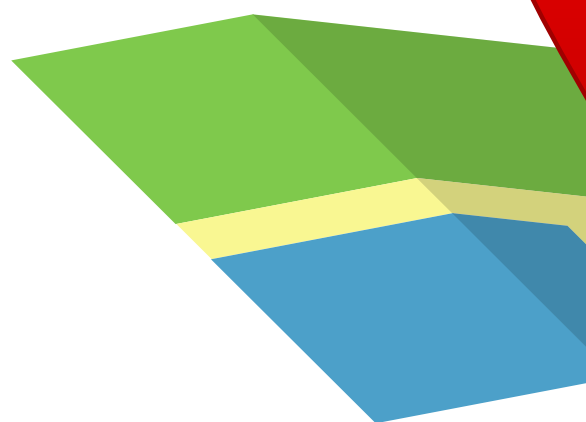
...now – removed facilities

Since this season, however, skiers can no longer rely on Google Maps at all: the internet giant has removed the display of ski lifts and slopes from its maps. Initially, users noticed this, and later, Google confirmed it.

In response to SI's inquiry about why this decision was made, the tech corporation gave a brief answer: "We experimented with showing ski-related information on Google Maps a few years ago, but have since removed this feature. Our experience has shown that many people get the latest and most up-to-date information directly from the ski resorts or use the maps provided by the resorts themselves."

Skiers raise the alarm

However, winter sports fans are disappointed and dissatisfied: for many, the information was an important navigation aid. Ski lift enthusiast Donát Sugataghy even started a petition on change.org, demanding that information



about ski slopes and lifts be brought back to the maps. In his petition, he highlights how important this information is for tourism and the local economy in the mountains. Especially users from countries like Austria and Switzerland could be disadvantaged by the removal of this feature, according to Sugataghy.

"Imagine a scenario where essential transportation systems like roads or railways disappear from Google Maps. That's the reality for us, the mountain residents and ski enthusiasts. Lifts are our way to reach heights; they make the inaccessible accessible," writes Sugataghy. By the time the magazine went to press, the petition had already gathered over 2,600 signatures.

Available alternatives

The missing information can partly be provided by the portals OpenSkiMap.org and OpenSnowMap. Both projects are mainly supported by enthusiasts and are based on OpenStreetMap data: anyone can edit the map. However, the data there is mainly geared towards winter sports enthusiasts, and many features that



Screenshot of the petition on change.org.
© SI World

could be useful to guests are simply missing. For example, the ski lifts are not integrated into the public transportation system. Individual ski resorts also publish maps on their websites, but experts believe this may not be enough to attract guests.



© PIXABAY

“Own systems are good, but without global platforms, and Google Maps is clearly the dominant player, the reach is lacking. As a result, guests lose their orientation, and sustainable mobility concepts remain unused,” writes Judith **Grass**, CEO of Golm Silvretta Lünersee Tourismus GmbH (Austria), on LinkedIn.

European Open Data Hub

Taking the situation into their own hands is what Hartmut **Wimmer**, founder and CEO of Outdooractive, proposes. His idea is to create a dedicated data hub in Europe. “Content-wise, one could start with a GTFS-compatible map dataset, so



This is how the terrain is displayed on Google Maps currently. © SI World

the data would already flow into the timetable systems,” explains Wimmer. GTFS stands for Geographic Feature Transportation System, which integrates geographic information and transport data into maps. Consequently, additional data could be provided to describe ski resorts, such as images, texts, prices, and opening hours.

All ski resorts could come together in an open, non-profit organization and fund the project collectively, according to Wimmer. Additionally, funding could be sought through grants.

“Depending on how willing the industry is to embrace such a shared digital world, it would first require a team of at least five employees and several years of development time. This will also be an ongoing process, the topic will never be completely finished.”

Little enthusiasm in the industry

Even after the ski industry event *BergBahnCamp 2023* (the predecessor of the *Mountain Summit 2025*), Wimmer wrote to the associations of ski resorts in all countries of the Eastern Alps: Switzerland responded with a rejection, and there was no reply from the others. “In my opinion, the ski resorts still don’t



This is what the map looks like on Outdooractive, as long as data is available.

© Outdooractive/swisstopo/BEV

seem to understand the issue, otherwise, I can’t explain their attitude,” wonders the entrepreneur.

Wimmer himself has experience in collecting such information. Outdooractive sold the data that appeared on Google Maps about 15 years ago to Google, after the company had digitized numerous ski resorts for the ADAC Ski Guide portal. The company ran this portal for ten years. “During that time, we were in regular contact with the ski resorts and asked them to update the data. Even back then, our requests were ignored. After a few years, there was one final update of the data on Google, and then nothing more.” Could this have influenced Google’s decision? That’s something to ponder.

What’s next?

The digital future of ski resorts now lies in the hands of their operators. Will they rely on enthusiasts, develop their own maps, or create a unified data hub after all? This question remains open. ez

HARTMUT WIMMER

Founder and CEO of Outdooractive

„I see only one opportunity for the ski resorts: their own Open Data Hub. The issue with the data is far too important to leave it to chance or to players from the USA or China. One can hardly imagine what would happen if an AI suddenly starts creating a global digital ski resort map.“

© Outdooractive AG



VISION

Europe-wide Open Data Hub

- Geometry of ski lifts and slopes
- Snow depth/slope conditions
- Open/closed status
- Summer/winter operation
- Integrating data from all existing systems
- Unified data standard
- Collaborative open-source platform
- API for free use
- Joint funding
- At least five employees

MOUNTAIN SUMMIT 2025: INPUTS FOR LEADERS

Key entrepreneurs from the alpine tourism and ski resort industries will share their experiences and discover the latest trends to help grow their businesses.

From September 17 to 19, 2025, around 150 professionals will gather in Oberstdorf (Germany) to exchange expertise and insights. Mountain Summit gives companies the chance to collaborate with clients on industry topics, showcase solutions, and build personal connections. At the same time, the event encourages learning from each other and exploring new perspectives.

Mountain Summit – who we are

Mountain Summit is an experienced player in the field of alpine technologies. For over seven years, we have successfully organized the industry event “BergBahnCamp” for alpine tourism and the cable car industry. This year, we are expanding our platform. Mountain Summit combines the strengths of a traditional mountain camp with the advantages of more established formats – including topic-focused keynotes, practical insights, and workshops.

Leitmotif: Resonance in Alpine Tourism

The theme of Mountain Summit 2025 is “Resonance in Alpine Tourism.” The



focus will be on the diverse interactions between guests, employees, locals, leaders, and the special demands of alpine tourism. The main idea is to create a mutual understanding of the needs.

It's designed by leaders, both from within the industry and related sectors, for leaders, with the aim of shaping the future of alpine tourism and the cable car sector through meaningful dialogue.

Key topics 2025

- Resonance in Alpine Tourism
- Resonance between people (summer guests/families/ employees/authorities)
- Resonance in adventure (cuisine/ sports/culture)
- Resonance in society (attitude of locals towards tourism/ mobility/ regional economy)
- Resonance in technology (AI, autonomous driving operation)
- Resonance in the details (products/ projects)
- Resonance in politics (EU/national)

Mountain Summit brings together up to 150 decision-makers. Besides representatives from the ski resort industry, among our speakers will be amusement park managers and their suppliers, hotel executives, and developers of digital technologies for the tourism sector. Together with politicians and communication specialists, we will

GERALD PICHLMAIR

Initiator of Mountain Summit

“Mountain Summit will be of great interest and value to entrepreneurs not only from German-speaking countries but also from beyond. The Alpine region has long been a leader in the cable car industry and all related technologies, serving as a sort of “Silicon Valley” in this field. Entrepreneurs have a unique opportunity to learn from experts and establish connections with the potential partners from other countries and continents. As organizers, we will ensure a comfortable environment for communication and knowledge exchange.”



THE ADVISORY BOARD OF MOUNTAIN SUMMIT 2025

discuss how to involve local communities in the development of tourism and build dialogue and cooperation in a way that ensures residents support tourism, which in turn drives economic growth.

In the cultural segment, experts will share what guests today expect from ski resorts – simply skiing is no longer enough. How can you make your destination more attractive in the summer? What are the trends in mountain-top gastronomy?

We will explore the development of the alpine business ecosystem from all angles – to get a comprehensive picture and ensure that every participant gains valuable insights into where to go next. „Benefit from the collective intelligence of the industry, the knowledge of experienced experts, and a network that unites alpine tourism professionals, ski resort operators, suppliers, restaurateurs, hoteliers, ski schools, sports rental companies, and associations,“ explains the initiator of Mountain Summit and director of way2meet, Gerald Pichlmair.

The cable car industry's perspective

To make the program and event as cable car industry-friendly as possible, the organizer, way2meet, relies on an advisory board of industry experts. The board is composed of both women and men, representing all four German-speaking Alpine countries (South Tyrol, Switzerland, Austria, Germany), as well as cable car operators and tourism professionals.

Also on board are the Oberstdorf-Kleinwalsertal ski resort as the host and SI - Seilbahnen International as the media partner. So far, several companies have already joined as partners (see the picture on page 30), and this list is constantly growing.



Henrik Volpert
Ski resort
Oberstdorf-Kleinwalsertal



Sophia Oberjakober
Mobility Consortium
South Tyrol



Werner Hanselitsch,
Ski resort
Oberurgl



Marianne Pfändler,
Ski resort Hoher Kasten



Domenico Bergamin,
Consultant & Developer



Beate Rubatscher-Larcher,
Ski resort Kaunertal & Pitztal

Why us?

As a company specializing in alpine tourism and cable cars, we carefully follow the latest developments in the industry and invite speakers who truly have valuable insights to share. We create the relevant program for our participants, bringing in experts both from within and outside the sector, who can provide fresh insights and help us view existing challenges from new perspectives. We approach the development of alpine tourism from various angles: from understanding what tourists want today and the trends to expect in the future, to practical workshops where our partners will

showcase different solutions for optimizing business operations. At the same time, we create an atmosphere of relaxed professional communication, where attendees can build meaningful connections and lay the groundwork for future collaboration. For our English-speaking guests translation services will be provided, so everyone can fully engage and benefit from the event.

Early bird tickets: Use the chance

Don't miss the chance to secure your spot at Mountain Summit with our early bird tickets. Available until July 8th, they offer a great opportunity to join the event at a reduced price. Interested? We look forward to welcoming you!

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The destination Oberstdorf is the ideal location for Mountain Summit 2025. © Daniel Kopatsch

More information at
bergnetzwerk.com



ICED CABLE CARS: CAUSES AND COUNTERMEASURES

Cable car operators often struggle with frozen cables, pulleys, and cabins. But when and how does ice form, and how can it be properly removed? We asked Bernhard Thoma from the Zugspitze cable car company in Germany for his insights and practical tips.

Formation of ice

When moist air cools down, some of the water condenses, leading to phenomena like rain or fog. On cool surfaces such as buildings, windows, and cables, water also settles, and when temperatures drop below freezing, it forms ice. The ice on cables can become large and heavy: frozen cables hang lower and strain the tensioning equipment. Ice falling suddenly can lead to strong vibrations and dynamic load peaks. Potential risks include the release of a cable from the pulley system, the crossing of suspension cables by traction cables, or damage to classic tension weights upon impact with the ground. The ice build-up can also block the system if motor power and torque are insufficient to release the ice. On the route, frozen rollers can be damaged when the system frees itself.

Types of ice formation

Ice isn't always the same: its structure, density, and appearance can vary based on weather and location. The following types of ice may form depending on the weather conditions:

Type of Ice	Weather Conditions	Structure
Clear/Rough Ice	-3°C to 0°C 26,6 to 0 32 °F (Freezing rain, frozen snow)	Solid deposit
Rime	-7°C to -3°C 19,4 to 26,6 °F (Moderate to fresh wind, freezing undercooled fog)	Medium-solid deposit
Frost	Below -7°C Below 19,4 °F (Calm wind or light wind)	Loose deposit

Source: Peil U., Ruff D.; Seile unter Eislast, TU Braunschweig

At higher altitudes and on plateaus between 700 to 1,200 meters, ice formation can be significant. Regions in the north, such as the first alpine ridges or mountain areas with large adjacent bodies of water, are particularly affected. Literature suggests expected ice thicknesses based on location:

Zone	Ice Thickness [cm] or [in]	
	Building under 100 m or 3937,01 in	Building over 100 m or 3937,01 in
A - Lowland	2 cm or 0,78 in	
B - Higher Altitudes	3 cm or 1,18 in	4 cm or 1,57 in
C - Pre-Alps/ Plateaus	4 cm or 1,57 in	6 cm or 2,36 in

Source: Petersen C.; Stahlbau, Springer Vieweg 2022

Therefore, the potential additional ice mass is also considered in the calculation of cable cars according to EN 12930.



Iced cable car: extreme example Are, Sweden. © FB-Screenshot/Are

Measures against ice build-up in operations

The industry shares tales of past methods or impressive photos on social media of de-icing operations. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of these methods is often not well documented: For circulating systems or mountain cable loops, some operators drive slowly at night to prevent ice formation. Some cable cars have been equipped with smaller drives to operate at low power for this night-time operation.

For aerial tramways, ice is typically broken off using ice scraper plates and special pulley bodies on the drive system. Years ago, attempts were made with a system that used artificially created vibrations to shake the ice off the cables at the push of a button. In Sweden, helicopters are sometimes used to break the ice from the cables by swinging a tree trunk against the suspension cable.

But what works best in practice? We spoke with Bernhard Thoma, Deputy Operations Manager of the Zugspitze Cable Car in Germany, who has experience managing ice on one of the world's most spectacular cable cars. The Zugspitze cable car spans nearly 4.5 kilometers in length and a 2-kilometer elevation difference.



De-icing in Åre with the help of tree trunks and helicopters. © FB-Screenshot/Åre



SI author Konstantin Kühner (left) with Bernhard Thoma from the Zugspitze cable car.

Zugspitze's approach

At the Zugspitze, a staff member stays overnight on the mountain. This allows stations to be controlled and cleared early, and cabins to be repositioned. In emergencies, a technician can come via the cogwheel railway through the tunnel to assist with the glacier cable car's start-up.

When the cable cars are iced over, the system is manually moved back and forth in the cabin intake area until all pulleys are free to move again. Additionally, foldable ice scraper systems are mounted at the Zugspitze's mountain station, which can be mechanically locked and electronically monitored. During operation, vehicles cannot enter the station, and the opposing track is also blocked to avoid confusion in work zones. The incoming traction cable must be de-iced at the mountain station, over a 300-meter stretch until the first cable carrier.

Keeping the cable car in motion

The most challenging situation arises when it rains below the summit and snows at higher elevations. Water from the drive system can freeze on the station rollers, making them freeze at the mountain station. Therefore, the roller profiles were modified to increase the distance from the station's steel parts. Also, the cable car is intentionally moved slower (8 m/s) on such days to maintain a 15-minute interval and ensure nearly continuous operation. Just 30 minutes of downtime is enough for the rollers to freeze.

Practical de-icing at the valley station

At the valley station, de-icing is easier. The traction cable can be gently nudged with the foot to loosen the ice, clearing the path to the first cable carrier. The more snow is removed before the station, the less needs to be cleared later. Ice scraper systems are installed on the cabins themselves to clear the suspension cables, with a 5-6 millimeter gap. Each drive unit also contains icebreaker rollers made of hard plastic. Experience has shown that the rollers are no longer mounted at the front of the cable car to avoid ice hitting the cabin's front windows. After breaking the ice, the cabin's roof still needs to be manually cleared.

Rustic but gentle on the cables

For slope security, even explosive cable cars must be kept in motion. This process is more rustic: moving forward and backward with the help of ice scraper plates on the windows to remove most of the ice. Sometimes, wooden beams and brooms are used to tackle stubborn ice. Preventatively, little can be done to stop ice formation, except to operate the system. However, with thoughtful planning and practical, proven devices and strategies, rapid and cable-friendly de-icing is possible.

Konstantin Kühner



Ice scraper (left) and white hard plastic roller on the drive system of the Zugspitze cable car.

COLORADO RESORT (USA): New highest chairlift in America?

Copper Mountain Resort in Colorado (USA) has submitted a new master development plan (MDP) that includes the construction of North America's highest ski lift. This is reported by the online magazine "Powder". The proposed Jacque East lift would feature an upper terminal exceeding 13,000 feet (3,962 metres) in elevation, surpassing the current record held by the Imperial Superchair at Breckenridge Ski Resort, which reaches 12,840 feet (3,913 metres). This new lift would expand Copper Mountain Resort's operational boundary, providing access to the eastern face of Jacque Peak for guests.

The planned expansion on Jacque Peak falls within Copper Mountain Resort's existing special use permit (SUP) boundary and includes an additional supporting lift – the new fixed-grip, three-person Thunderbird. The Jacque East lift, in contrast, would be detachable to better withstand high winds and accommodate anticipated demand, as outlined in the MDP. Covering approximately 500 acres (202 hectares), the expanded terrain would rank among the



highest skiable areas in North America. The ambitious MDP extends beyond this expansion. Over the next decade, Copper Mountain Resort aims to utilize its existing SUP to address the growing demand for developed recreational skiing. Future plans include constructing several additional lifts and upgrading eight existing ones. One proposal involves replacing the Super Bee lift with a detachable eight-

person lift featuring a mid-station. If completed, this upgrade would make Copper Mountain Resort one of the few ski areas in the U.S. to feature an eight-seater.

In addition to the Jacque East and Thunderbird lifts, the MDP proposes four additional new lifts, including the Union Meadows lift. This detachable quad would provide access to Union Meadows, Tucker Gulch, and Copper Bowl. Other planned improvements include enhancements to guest services, such as replacing the T-Rex Grill and Flyer's Restaurant, installing a Remote Avalanche Control (RAC) system in Tucker Gulch, and undertaking glading projects across the mountain.

© Copper Mountain Resort

JAPAN:

Copper thieves shut down ski resort in the far east

The popular ski resort Manza Onsen in Japan is struggling with the consequences of copper thefts that have significantly impacted operations. Due to the theft of copper cables and materials, the resort can operate only two out of five cable cars this season. The damage is estimated at a minimum of three million yen.



Police have already launched an investigation, as similar thefts have been reported in other regions, particularly in the Kanto region. The theft has not only affected the ski resort's infrastructure but also shaken guests' confidence in the resort's safety. Despite these challenges, Manza Onsen is now seeking solutions to offer tourists a safe and enjoyable experience while working to restore full operational capacity.

© Flaticon

DOPPELMAYR USA: New CEO Keith Johns

Katharina **Schmitz**, who joined DOPPELMAYR USA in 2018 and became CEO in April 2020, left the position on March 31, 2025, for personal reasons. Keith **Johns**



assumed the role of CEO on April 1, 2025. During his time at DOPPELMAYR USA since 2021, he was responsible for operational management and strategic project management. Before his tenure at DOPPELMAYR USA, Johns had further developed his leadership skills in various roles in engineering, construction & project management.

As acting CEO at an energy technology company, he oversaw strategic direction and complex operational initiatives. He will serve DOPPELMAYR USA well in this next chapter.

© DOPPELMAYR

FRANCE & ITALY: Ski resorts invest in new cable cars



The new gondola "Cotch". © LEITNER

Several ski resorts in France and Italy have recently made significant investments in new cable cars. For example, the French ski resort of Gourette has introduced the 10-passenger gondola lift "Cotch": It was built along the route of a decommissioned six-seater chairlift. The gondola lift now transports up to 2,000 people per hour with 24 premium Diamond EVO cabins. In the La Forêt Blanche ski area, the six-seater chairlift "Homme de Pierre" replaces two existing lifts: the three-seater chairlift "Césier" and the "Homme de Pierre" drag lift. It features individual footrests and bike holders. The system can transport up to 2,400 people

per hour, ensuring even faster access to the mountain station at an altitude of 2,376 meters. No fewer than eight Italian ski resorts are relying on the latest cable car technology this winter. One of these projects is the "Steinermändl" six-seater chairlift. This lift follows the existing route of the former four-seater chairlift and cuts the travel time for winter sports enthusiasts in the Gitschberg Jochtal ski area in half, reaching the highest point at over 6,889 feet (2,100 meters). The new system features weather-protected chairs, individual footrests, premium padding, and seat heating, with station cladding designed by Pininfarina. It also provides access to various slopes as well as the newly built fun park in Jochtal, which includes a SkiMovie course. Further cable car installations have been completed in the Pila and Cervinia ski areas, in the Drei Zinnen Dolomites, San Martino di Castrozza, Carezza, and the Arabba/Marmolada ski area, which is part of the "Sellaronda" ski circuit. In all these projects, LEITNER served as the manufacturer.

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