

Case Study

SBB'S ORGANIC VISIBILITY ON CHINESE SEARCH ENGINE BAIDU

Switzerland was a popular holiday destination for Chinese tourists before the pandemic, and this remains the case in the post-Covid era. As a result, SBB operates its own Chinese-language website targeted toward visitors from China. To ensure content could reach potential customers via common Chinese search engines, too, SBB worked with Webrepublic to develop a series of measures to substantially improve the website's ranking for relevant keywords.

INITIAL SITUATION

The Swiss tourism industry believes that there is great potential in travelers from China and targets this group accordingly. SBB has launched a website for the Chinese market so that Chinese tourists can access public transport in Switzerland as easily as possible. When it comes to making this website visible for its target audience, acquiring the necessary expertise about the Chinese market and adapting the strategy in line with this pose a particular challenge. This is because existing success models cannot simply be transferred to another market, even if a brand is already enjoying success in the West. Read these specialist articles by our experts to learn how to tap into the Chinese market and how SEA works on Baidu.

GOALS

- ★ Making the Chinese market more aware of SBB's products
- ★ Providing access to ticket purchase options and key content on SBB.ch for Chinese visitors
- ★ Communicating SBB's brand value and the quality of its services to the Chinese market

MEASURES

To ensure the website reaches the right audience, Webrepublic worked with SBB to develop steps to safeguard its visibility on the relevant platforms. The search engine Baidu holds the largest market share in China, which is why optimizing the website for Baidu was a central element of the project. The members of Webrepublic's China team, all of whom are Chinese native speakers, worked with the international SEO team to analyze the website's performance. As part of this, they identified three challenges for which they subsequently developed concrete solutions:

- ★ SBB's Chinese website was not indexed on Baidu: its entire URL structure needed to be modified and submitted for indexing.
- ★ The website's page speed was too slow, with sluggish loading times reducing its organic visibility on the search engine: Webrepublic recommended reducing the file size of all the images and graphics on the website. Following this, it monitored the changes (desktop and mobile) in WiFi and 4G traffic.
- ★ The website had scarcely any organic ranking on Baidu: analysis of Baidu Data Intelligence and Baidu Ranking Intelligence enabled Webrepublic to define keywords and metadata that were placed on SBB's website to boost its organic visibility.

RESULTS

- ★ Thanks to the new URL structure, SBB's Chinese website was successfully indexed on Baidu.
- ★ The page speed of the Chinese website and SBB's general website was improved.
- ★ The ranking of SBB's Chinese website was raised for relevant keywords, too: for instance, it rose from 24th to 2nd place in the search results for the keyword "swiss railway".



“We are delighted to be part of SBB’s project for the Chinese market and contribute to boosting their organic presence for the Chinese audience. We deployed a string of measures, laying a solid foundation so SBB’s Chinese website can enjoy a long-term improvement in its visibility on China’s leading search engine.”

Shiyu Piao Stocker, Senior Specialist SEA, Webrepublic AG

“Thanks to Webrepublic’s expertise in the Chinese market and the search engine Baidu, we succeeded in making SBB.ch visible on this Chinese search engine. In turn, we can provide Chinese tourists with all the information they need about traveling by train in Switzerland before they get here – in their own language, to boot.”

Mirjam Niederberger, Junior SEO Specialist, SBB

