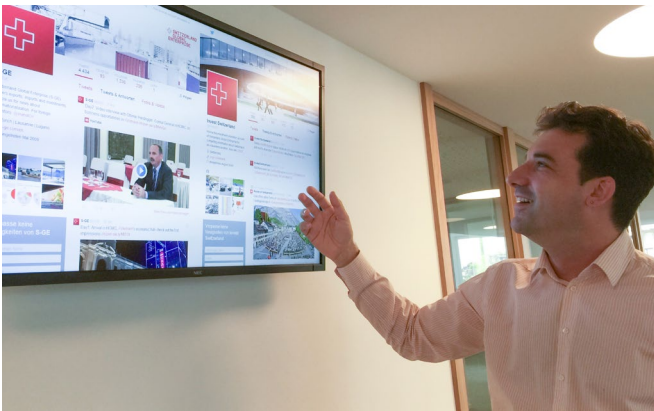# MBA ETH SCM Success Story

Making Switzerland more competitive

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Back to the future with cross-media marketing
When you enter the bright, open foyer and are cheerfully offered an espresso by the reception you realize that this is not your typical municipal office. Welcome to Switzerland Global Enterprise. The walls covered with large screens that, at first glance, look like Bloomberg newsfeeds. Take a seat in the colourful lounge, and the tables turn out to be screens too, blooming with maps of the economic geography of Switzerland. Before we know it, we find themselves playing with the cool equipment, tapping and sweeping from one scenario to another: what are the averages rents in the neighbourhoods? Where do I pay the least tax? And even, where are the nearest ski slopes?

Remo Daguati and his team designed this remarkable experience. He selected the high tech apps, maps, touchscreens, intuitive space-age displays. But it is more than entertaining technology. Switzerland Global Enterprise has a mandate to market the country for business investment, to attract the settlement of company headquarters. This is no easy task in one of the highest cost locations in the world. Remo is not a software engineer, nor an internet entrepreneur. A graduate of business administration at HSG, he completed his MBA in Supply Chain Management

at ETH in 2012, and the information technology on which S-GE depends was the subject of his Master Thesis.

Switzerland Global Enterprise
Switzerland Global Enterprise is essentially a marketing machine selling the product «Switzerland as a business location». Its success depends on real-time information, distributed to its representatives around the globe. Handbooks and fact sheets are only the beginning. Staff at the most remote Swiss Business Hubs must know the details of the latest changes in federal and each canton's legal and economic environment. The legislative upheavals after the 2014 referendum on immigration or the SNB's drop of the Euro-Franc peg are examples of the topics which determine investor confidence. In Remo's words:

In a world which is constantly changing, we distribute and promote Swiss content around the globe. It has to be in the right place at the right time in the right language: timely, complete, and accurate.

Material is vital for internal communication to train our people and empower the teams to sell Switzerland to potential investors. But if it is not up to date, they cannot

his content lost value as it ages. Storing it was expensive. Because of the many formats and languages, S-GE had a huge number of variations in its product line, making it hard to plan the inventory so it would serve the uncertain requirements of its customers.

«The MBA takes you out of the office, you have conversations with classmates, you go places and get new ideas. That inspires you.»

represent the location confidently. Our value proposition cannot be adequately articulated and the lead will be lost.

Remo's teams have to inform potential investors of what could happen in the future, with reasonable accuracy, and this in 9 languages and multiple media. Prior to the IT transformation at S-GE, this material was produced every 2 years, only in the form of investor handbooks. By the time it went to print, the content was always two years old and the numbers were outdated by 3 years, because of inbuilt delays and lead times. The last edition of the old system contained statistics which were outdated by 3 years. There was clear potential to improve the efficiency of the organization.

Managing Digital Content like a supply chain
During his MBA program, Remo's key insight was that information can be managed like a product. Information in digital form must be sourced, processed, finished, and distributed to consumers. Hence, it is subject to the same types of bottlenecks, redundant efforts, and waste that material goods typically face in the production industries that he studied at ETH. He redefined S-GE's value proposition to be the production of information to be distributed to the right place, at the right time, in the right quality and format. Like the computer chips he observed on company visits,

Remo explains that the inspiration was not a ready-made lesson, but the outcome of the entire experience with his MBA class: «I didn't go to Prof. Fleisch's (note: IT professor at ETH) lecture and decide to do this. Playing the beer game gave me ideas. Every time I was in a warehouse, I wondered how what I was seeing applied to my own content. Just-in-time delivery, for example. The way material was handled in factories gave me inspiration. The MBA takes you out of the office, you have conversations with classmates, you go places and get new ideas. That inspires you.»

Reinvention of IT : «It's like a warehouse.»
The solution that Remo implemented is the digital equivalent of product postponement. Today, S-GE stores all rich media assets like texts, images or videos as a single item that is decoupled from the final form of publication (web, print, app etc.). Thanks to a new cross media publishing process, different items are combined to create the mother document. This basic building block is customized once a firm requirement has been identified, in which case it is translated and channeled to the right medium and audience. With this innovation, marketing material is no longer stored in inflexible paper form, updated in cycles of years, going out of date prior to release. After the implementation of Remo's design, S-GE's new capabilities include updating content

every quarter. After the Swiss National Bank announced that it would abandon its peg of the Euro, obsolete statements had to be removed from existing handbooks. The central mother document permitted a fast and efficient intervention. Using print-on-demand technology, the new manuals were not shipped around the world, but printed by the Swiss Business Hubs themselves. S-GE was able to reduce the paper volume required by far. Of course the personalization of handbooks on the country level is easy to do, supporting 9 languages and the entire network of Swiss Business Hubs around the world. Based on the «mother document», the previously daunting complexity of localization became an easy routine.

With 9 languages and 10-15 annual communication blasts on multiple media platforms, Remo's solution designed how the «warehouse» of content would be most efficiently organized. This focused not only on the technology platforms, but on the underlying processes, and re-organization of his teams. Supervised by Prof. Fleisch at ETH, his design of e-business for Switzerland Investment Promotion discovered that, next to a Customer Relationship system, Financial, and Content management would also need to a home in the new system. Cross-media management, available in prototype form in 2012, could store a variety of data formats in one centralized

system, for subsequent distribution in all languages and media, be it a book, pamphlet, webpage, or social media. Where previously content was stored redundantly and incompatibly, in many places by different stakeholders, the Cross-media tool would allow S-GE to control the quality of its messages. The graphics and text which are embedded in the investor handbook would be individual elements detached from one another and from the medium, so they could be re-used on demand, in a consistent form wherever they appeared to consumers.

When describing his revamped publishing process, Remo's enthusiasm is infectious: «We now have a real production process. Someone writes the material, then they publish it in our traditional newsticker. From the newsticker or any landing page, they produce what I call ‹sushi pieces› of information. Then they post it into HootSuite, which is a collaboration tool for Social Media. This helps combine all your streams into one account. You can see what is visible where, and begin to plan your posts. You can schedule and target specific audiences. You can adjust company channels. That makes it very efficient, allowing you to spread the same information in up to 25 channels. I post up to 10 times a day. One third is authored by myself, the rest by my staff on various topics. I post and re-post it, with different comments.»

«This is how the good news about Switzerland is spread, with the broadest potential impact.»

Today, S-GE produces its own content. Once a day a new study or story is introduced. Besides editing output streams, teams also monitor the media landscape. In each region of Switzerland, a designated editor identifies regional news that might be relevant for the target audiences. All

of the local writers are integrated into S-GE's centralized editor system, which consists of a global layer with 10 markets, a national layer, and most recently, regional, and cantonal layers. With 26 cantons, 5 areas in Switzerland, and 10 markets worldwide, the web presence amounts to 42 landing pages, each with its own stickers. Three years after graduating, Remo estimates that 90% of his Master's Thesis was implemented by his organization. The expanded capabilities, made possible by more efficient supply management of content, have inevitably resulted in a bigger portfolio of services for S-GE: in addition to the original investor handbook, they now support an online tax calculator, real estate sites or an overview of leading companies of Switzerland by sectors. He concludes: «This is how the good news about Switzerland is spread, with the broadest potential impact.»

Switzerland's New Face to the World
Economists generally dismiss governmental or semi-public agencies as incapable of using resources efficiently. Not so at the non-profit S-GE, whose brave new world measures the benefit for tax-payers and citizens. Remo explains the details: «We track every download, every click, every transaction and how many contacts to the consultants are set up. It's indirect, but we can still justify the investments. We lead people to the landing page and then to a triggered action. When they don't want to interact with us, we measure the bounce rate. Paid visits, organic growth, communication campaigns, in 10 markets as complex as Russia and China. We have one person responsible for search engine optimization. We find out how much it costs to invite a guest to an event. How much it costs to provide useful content via electronic media.»

Drawing on its process-driven digital «warehouse», which works as precisely as a Swiss watch, S-GE can calculate its contribution to economic value: how many companies settle as a result of each account, how many jobs are created, and exactly how much tax income is generated. «Our market share in settlements by the Cantons has increased in the last years.» Out of every franc spent by the non-profit S-GE, Remo computes that 2 Francs are returned to the Swiss tax payers, a handsome 100% return.

An even more powerful outcome than the pure financial return is the way that the value proposition of S-GE has matured, as a result of better-informed, better-trained, more confident representatives.

«Our representatives have upskilled to market Switzerland as a high-tech destination, and no longer as a tax shelter.»

In Remo's words: «In the old days, the target were companies looking for tax breaks. Now we want value-adding, high tech projects which create jobs. Today, we reach fewer people, but are better focused on the target audience, with better quality and visibility of our impact. Four years ago, our colleagues in the Swiss Business hubs only organized events. Today, their jobs also include location sales. They have upskilled to market Switzerland as a high-tech destination, and no longer as a tax shelter.»