ACSI ACSI ACSI DIMES

SPRING 2021 EDITION

ACSI Times is published by Europe's leading campsite specialist. In this edition, we will of course address the difficult situation the camping sector has found itself in due to the corona pandemic, but we will also look at the new opportunities people searched for and grabbed because of it. We give campsite managers from across Europe a chance to have their say, we show figures, bring you news about our partnership with camping.info and provide tips to help you present your campsite in the best possible way.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN ACSI AND CAMPING.INFO

European citizens are increasingly doing business online. Europe's two largest campsite platforms, ACSI and camping.info have joined forces to create a Europewide booking system for the campsite sector.

Read the interview with both CEOs on page 2

MOTORHOME AND CARAVAN SALES ON THE RISE

During the corona crisis many holidaymakers discovered or rediscovered the advantages of a camping holiday. The figures of European motorhome and caravan sales reflect this trend. *Read more on page 5*

CAMPSITES TALK ABOUT 2020 AND LOOK AHEAD

ACSI asked campsites from across Europe about their experiences in the past year and we looked forward to the future. Read more on pages 6-11

GOOD MARKETING IS KEY

The German campsite marketing specialist Hannes Felix Müller gives tips on how you can strengthen the position of your campsite as a brand. *Read more on page 12*

BALANCE BETWEEN HUMANS

European collaboration is sorely needed for the future of tourism

ACSI and camping.info together in online bookings

For many campsites, 2020 was a year they would rather forget. European tourism was dealt a blow that still reverberates in many countries. In the meantime, campers are eager to go on holiday again both nationally as well as internationally. Besides the vaccines and clear corona rules, improved European collaboration also plays a key role. Until now, Europe has been lacking collaboration and solidarity above all. If we can learn one lesson from the corona crisis it is that collaboration is essential in times of crisis.

Campers want the convenience of booking online

Solving problems together: that's the reason that Europe's two largest online campsite platforms have found each other. As of this year, ACSI and camping.info have joined forces so that through one affiliation, campsites become bookable for tens of millions of European campers.

Together, these two family businesses want to create the best and fairest European booking system for campsites. They do that step by step without big promises. A campsite manages the availability for booking online via ACSI or camping.info. This enables the campsites themselves to respond to campers' changing desires. Because a whole new generation of campers are on their way, and they do everything online. They want to arrange their camping holiday quickly and easily and booking online is an essential part of that.



Two family entrepreneurs with a tradition in the camping sector have their say In an interview on page 2, Ramon van Reine from ACSI and Maximilian Möhrle from camping.info talk extensively about what motivated two competitors to work together.

continued on page 2

EU COVID-19 certificate should make tourism possible

A corona passport for all of Europe

The EU COVID-19 certificate should enable tourism across Europe this coming holiday season. This special travel document, also called the corona passport, works very simply. Anyone who has been vaccinated, recently recovered from corona or has a negative corona test can generate a QR code as proof. That OR code can be scanned for verification. That could be on passing a border but also, for example, to gain access to amusement parks, hospitality venues and campsites.

EU COVID-19 certificate is safe The QR code only indicates whether someone is allowed to travel but not why. Therefore, you

cannot see which travel conditions that person meets. You are not allowed to ask either because that is personal medical information. Besides the QR code, you can only see the name and date of birth to check someone's identification.



AND COMPUTERS

With online booking, there should always be the option to have human contact. Research indicates that customers greatly appreciate this.

Read more on **page 13**

CAMPING DESTINATIONS IN THE PICTURE

Carinthia in Austria used 2020 to establish itself as a strong camping destination in the ACSI FreeLife TestTour.

 Read on page 14 how that went
 Read on page 15 how ACSI helped other regions put themselves on campers' maps. What does a corona passport mean for you?

The question of whether you, as a campsite owner, have to scan the QR codes depends on the regulations in your country. If local regulations state you must check your guests, you can do that by scanning the QR code with a smartphone or tablet. The EU COVID-19 certificate guarantees that you can fully comply with privacy laws.

ACSI and camping.info join forces

ACSI camping.info Booking will be launched mid-May



Maximilian Möhrle (left) and Ramon van Reine (right).

Europe's two largest players on the campsite market, ACSI and camping.info, are joining forces to launch ACSI camping. info Booking. With one contract, campsites will soon be affiliated to Europe's two largest booking platforms. Together they generate about 40 million visits. Neither company is a stranger to the camping sector. For years they have been offering campers the possibility to search for and book campsites online.

Five benefits of the collaboration between ACSI and camping.info:

1. With one contract, campsites are bookable with the European market leaders (with a focus on campers in the Netherlands and Germany).

ACSI serves campers across Europe via Eurocampings.eu, CampingCard.com and the corresponding apps. Camping.info is the largest campsite platform for campsites in the German-speaking market. Both parties were looking for ways to make it even easier for campsites to be bookable for a large group of campers with the least possible effort.

Logical step

Competitors that collaborate is an extremely rare phenomenon, but for ACSI CEO Ramon van Reine and camping.info CEO Maximilian Möhrle it was a logical step. 'We want to work together in the areas where we can achieve solutions together. So that we can offer a better service to both the campsites as well as campers,' says Maximilian. Ramon: 'I first met Maximilian at a camping congress in North Germany. He was giving a presentation about booking campsites online. He started by asking the audience who was staying in a hotel that evening. Everyone put up their hand. He then asked the audience if they had booked online. All hands went up in the air again. Finally, he asked the audience why campsites

were not yet bookable online. He instantly had everyone's attention. I was extremely impressed and wanted to brainstorm with him.' channels. That will enable us to continue to develop at a faster pace and get as many campsites as possible affiliated to the platform. You could compare it to the car industry, where they use one concern's platform for multiple car brands. Brands that compete for consumers is something ACSI and camping.info will also continue to do towards campers'.

Max Camping

Camping.info was founded in 2006 by the Austrian Erwin Oberascher. He created a campsite platform, much like TripAdvisor was for restaurants at the time. The campsite information consisted of general information and reviews by campers themselves. In turn, Maximilian Möhrle started the online booking platform Max Camping in 2015, where mainly German campsites could be booked. 'It wasn't easy because I discovered a good technical infrastructure for online booking was almost non-existent for campsites, and campsite owners were wary of commissions and had heard negative stories from hotels about Booking.com.' And yet, it didn't deter Maximilian from his mission to make the largest possible number of campsites bookable online for campers. In 2018, together with Truma CEO Alexander Wottrich, he took over camping.info. 'We needed technical updates and it was quite

Camping.info CEO Maximilian Möhrle: 'As a family business, you have a different perspective.

- 2. No Google Ads campaign in the name of your campsite
- 3. New campers get to know your campsite
- 4. By entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs
- 5. Linked to your PMS or channel manager



You focus on future stability'

Car industry

And no sooner said than done. Maximilian and Ramon spoke on several occasions. 'We hit it off right away. I wanted to learn about Ramon's perspective on the campsite market. ACSI is a market leader in Europe, so a serious party. At a certain point, I mentioned that I would like to collaborate,' states Maximilian. Ramon: 'We are bringing together our expertise in the field of software development and are making a platform that can run on both difficult to find developers to do that. But we reinvented it and have modernised it to create what we have now.'

Experience spanning 56 years ACSI has existed since 1965 and was founded by Ed van Reine, the father of the current CEO Ramon van Reine. ACSI was an early bird in the field of internet. In 1998, it developed the first version of Eurocampings.eu which was immediately available in four languages. Since then, it has grown

to a platform offering extensive campsite information about no less than 9,700 European campsites in 14 different languages. The information is collected by inspectors who inspect the campsites annually. 'That is our strength. And it will remain that way,' states Ramon. Since 2016, campers have been able to book a camping pitch or accommodation directly via Eurocampings.eu. Ramon talks about the collaboration: 'We balance each other as companies. In terms of software, we are seamlessly aligned. Because we will be developing together, we can develop twice as fast and increase the selection of campsites faster than if we both did that independently. As such, we will become a party everyone wants to join for Property Management Systems'.

Supporting campsites

According to Maximilian, the success of the collaboration mainly lies in the fact that both entrepreneurs dare to think out of the box. 'We are not going to shout about becoming the biggest but working with the campsites, we are going to grow and become stronger, step by step. We share the same vision on that. We aim for the best service for campsites. We want to support campsites'. Ramon adds: 'And of course offer campers as many bookable campsites as possible'.

Maximilian: 'We save campsites a lot of time. Think of staff at reception, who get asked many of the same questions on the phone. At least, always the question of availability within a certain period. These are questions a userfriendly booking environment can answer. If you add up all those telephone hours over a year and calculate how much that costs you as a campsite owner, the commission per booking is not so bad. The staff at reception can spend that time on social interaction with the guests at the campsite and on improving the service, something a computer cannot do. Being affiliated to our booking



arranged for the next generation, so you make long-term choices. Decisions are not only driven by profit or advantage but also by future stability. That is why

'With one contract, a campsite has a reach of both CEOs talk regularly with campsites across Europe. That focus on service is a matter of course for them. 'We certainly do not want to abuse the trust campsite's have in us. Or make them dependent on us. We want to offer campsites an improved and faster service, not only when they need us', emphasises Ramon.

we offer the largest reach in Europe and that is a massive opportunity for campsites'. Ramon adds, 'We are not going to advertise on Google with a campsite's good name. Campers who already know the campsite can book directly with the campsite itself. We don't want to get in the way of that. What we want to do is serve the camper who is still

panies, don't have to do a thing. The agreement will be transferred to ACSI camping.info Booking. Campsites who have not signed up yet are more than welcome of course. The platform will be up and running from mid-May. Ramon: 'Campsites have already received a mail with information about this partnership.' Maximilian is full of confidence

40 million visitors

channels is therefore not only an additional marketing channel but also a management system'.

Future orientation

Another success factor is that both ACSI as well as camping.info are family businesses. 'I come from a family business as does my business partner Alexander. You have a different perspective as a family business. You don't look at the short term because everything you do has consequences for the following generation. You want to have everything properly

I am convinced that working in the camping sector is so suited to us because many campsites are family businesses too. They look at their campsites the same way,' states Maximilian. 'And we both have dozens of years of camping experience. Each in our own way. Max has a motorhome, and my family and I travel with a caravan,' adds Ramon.

Service

Both companies carry out regular surveys into what campsites want. But even when not doing surveys,

Reliable partners

Maximilian is convinced that many campsites will be pleased with this partnership. 'There may be some apprehension that we have now become extremely big, but we still want to be around in ten years, so we want to work with campsites in a fair way. We therefore only work with campsites that have chosen to be bookable via our websites, so for example, you won't find Booking.com on our websites. ACSI and camping.info are two sizeable private companies. That is our strength. With Ramon and I, campsites have reliable partners who have been in this industry for years. Together,

ACSI CEO Ramon van Reine: 'We want to offer campers the highest possible number of bookable campsites'

searching by offering the best campsites in a certain area. Then all the camper has to do, is choose and book directly'.

'Our system is already the best the market has to offer, and it will only get better!'

How it works

Campsites that already have a contract with one of the two com-

Large differences visible in number of overnight stays **The figures for 2020**



For the tourism sector, 2020 was a year characterised by the coronavirus. Campsite owners saw the spring season wither away and they held their breath in anticipation of what the high season and autumn would bring. In the end, the campsites could reopen their doors, but the question as to whether campers would come plagued the market.

The number of overnight stays tell the story. The campers came. Sometimes in large numbers, but more often in dribs and drabs. Almost no country recorded better figures than in 2019. However, across Europe – and sometimes even regionally – we saw massive differences. And compared to hotels and group accommodation for example, the camping sector did rather well. Big differences in Germany

Germany shows many similarities to the Netherlands. With over 34 million overnight stays at campsites, it was only 5% behind the record year of 2019. And here too, domestic campers saved the season. The 32 million domestic overnight stays were even a new record, while the 2.2 million overnight stays by foreign guests was an all time low. There are big regional differences, however. Northern states such as Saxony-Anhalt (+24.9%) and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (+10.8%) did well, while the crisis hit harder in Saarland (-22.6%), Thuringia (-15.1%) and Baden-Württemberg (-15%).

and August was limited to only 10 to 15% fewer bookings than usual. The official seasonal figures have not yet been announced but various sources report a decrease of 15 to 40%. The differences between campsites are huge. Campsites with many seasonal pitches and that are largely dependent on foreign guests were hit harder than campsites with a lot of hire accommodation. And due to the prolonged heat in the Ardèche and the Provence, campsites inland and in the mountains did good business.

compared to 2019. Here too, foreign guests were sorely missed. The number of overnights stays at campsites by foreign campers fell by 66.8%. Looking at the total tourism sector in Spain, the share for the camping branch did increase. Overnight stays at campsites represented 15% of the total, while that was 8.5% in 2019.

Croatia hit hard

Croatia is another country hit hard by the corona crisis. In 2020, there were over 9.1 million overnight stays and approximately 1.3 million arrivals. This means a reduction of 53% in overnight stays and 56% in arrivals compared to 2019. The share of the number of Croatians camping in their own country increased to a record high of 6%. However, this was nowhere near enough to compensate for the Estanyet campsite in Spain

loss of foreign guests. In particular, the Dutch (-82%) and Italians (-77%) stayed away, but also fewer Germans (-49%), Austrians (-67%) and Slovenians (-30%) made their way to Croatia.

More figures

Elsewhere in Europe, most of the recorded figures were in the red. For example, the number of overnight stays at campsites fell by 12.6% in Austria. Denmark had comparable scores with the Netherlands and Germany and with a 3% reduction, the damage was limited. The Czech Republic (+ 3%) is one of the few countries where the figures were better in 2020 than in 2019.

The Netherlands: -4%

Figures from Statistics Netherlands show that the number of tourist overnight stays in the Netherlands fell by 30% in 2020 compared to 2019. With a 4% reduction the campsites did relatively well. In 2020, Dutch campsites had 21 million overnight stays. The number of overnight stays by the Dutch in their own country rose by 10%. However, the increase was insufficient to compensate for the reduction in the number of overnight stays by foreign guests (-42%).

Sharp decrease in France

France had an extremely short camping season during which the number of reservations up to and including June lagged far behind normal. Since many French decided to go on holiday in their own country, the damage in July **Disastrous season in Italy** In Italy, there was little to cheer about in 2020. The Italian camping branch is largely dependent on foreign guests – many Northern Europeans – and the figures reflect this. The number of overnight stays by foreign guests fell by no less than 71% compared to 2019. In terms of economics, this is a decline of over 30 million euros in income.

Decline in Spain

The camping season was also disappointing in Spain. The Spanish Statistical Office calculated the number of overnight stays at 21.7 million. A decline of 46.7%

European split

The figures show a clear split in Europe. Due to the restrictive measures, large-scale holiday travel by Northern Europeans to the south of Europe didn't take place. The campsites in those countries that have traditionally been highly dependent on foreign guests suffered badly as a result. In Northern Europe, the consequences were limited because many holiday-goers chose to go on holiday in their own country.



Dear Campsite Owner or Manager,

We are at the start of a new camping season. That sounds completely normal but after 2020, we know that things don't always go as planned. After a disastrous year for the tourism sector, we are still in the grip of the coronavirus, even if that grip is fortunately loosening. We all hope the vaccination campaigns have a positive effect. Though the future is still uncertain, I would like to look forward with optimism. Although the corona crisis has hit us all hard, this exceptional time has provided many new insights.

Winston Churchill once said: 'Never let a good crisis go to waste'. And we took heed of those words this past year. Despite (or perhaps even thanks to) the coronavirus, we searched for opportunities. We hope this will enable us to emerge even stronger from this exceptional crisis. On page 2, you have read about the collaboration between ACSI and camping. info. And throughout the year we have been working behind the scenes on improving our apps and websites.

In the past year, we have also had intensive contact with our campsites. After all, we have to overcome this crisis together. We asked some of you about your experiences in 2020 and expectations for 2021. And that provided good as well as bad news. Unfortunately, the picture across Europe differs from country to country. Some countries had a great year in 2020, and they expect much the same again in 2021. Others are concerned about the strict measures in their own country. You can read all about that on page 6.

I wish you all the best for the coming year.

Ramon van Reine CEO at ACSI

The caravan and motorhome industry is doing well **ACSI foresees a bright future**

The camping world has suffered as a consequence of the corona pandemic. And yet, the first rays of sunshine are breaking through the clouds. Figures from the European caravan and motorhome industry still show a positive development. This significant indicator also noted increased sales in 2020 and that bodes well for the coming years.

The aftermath of the economic crisis in 2013 formed a low point, but since then caravan and motorhome sales have been rising. The ECF (European Caravan Federation) shows that the number of new units sold in Europe increased by 11.6% in 2020 compared to 2019. And whereas the market for caravans is stabilising somewhat (-2.9%), the growth in the number of new motorhomes continues unabated (+20.1). On top of that, various sources indicate that second-hand caravan and motorhome sales are rising. For the Netherlands, for instance, BOVAG (Association of Automobile Dealers and Garage Owners) quotes figures of a 40% increase for motorhomes and 7% increase for caravans in the first months of 2021.

It's raining records in Germany In this list, Germany is proudly in the lead and it is also increasingly developing into a genuine camping country. As one of the few countries, Germany has growing figures in 2020 for both the sale of new caravans (+8.2%) as well as new motorhomes (+44.8%). The trade in second-hand vehicles also rose dramatically. With a total turnover of 12.5 million euros, the German caravan and motorhome industry grew once again and for the seventh (!) year in a row, it ended with a new record.

Even more growth markets

There are more countries where caravan and motorhome sales are on the rise. Denmark, Sweden and Finland show a considerable growth in the number of new caravans sold. In 2020, the number of new motorhome sales grew the most in Austria (+74.2%), Germany, Switzerland and Denmark (once again). The markets in Eastern Europe also offer perspective. In Poland, for example, the number of caravans increased to far above 100,000 and the number of motorhome sales increased by over 50%.

times and increasing numbers of people are (re)discovering camping. Furthermore, new caravans and motorhomes offer increasing luxury and comfort, which is perfectly aligned to the wishes of this group of campers.

Mixed messages

The growing sales figures do seem at odds with closed campsites and the limited travel options that currently exist. Yet, the caravan and motorhome industry is a significant indicator for what will happen in the future. Campers who buy a caravan and motorhome right now, will be going on the road with it in the coming years. They are preparing themselves for when it is possible again. Every cloud has a silver lining after all!



Number of new caravans and motorhomes sold in Europe (2007-2020)

100.000

The Netherlands, the camping country

The Netherlands is known as the camping country of Europe. Looking at the number of caravans and motorhomes per 1,000 inhabitants, this still appears to be the case. It is higher than anywhere else. And with a driving fleet of about 567,000 caravans and motorhomes, the Netherlands is ranked fourth place in Europe. The only countries with more caravans and motorhomes driving around are Germany, France and Great Britain.

New campers

The growing sales figures in the European caravan and motorhome industry fit the picture that has recently formed. Camping is the way to go on holiday in these



Looking back and looking ahead Campsites have their say about corona

How have campsites in Europe experienced the past year? And what do they see for the future? ACSI asked 39 campsites from 23 European countries. Their answers provide a good picture of the effect corona has had this past year on campsites across Europe: from Greece to Sweden and from Portugal to Finland.

The experiences differ greatly. No surprise really considering some campsites had a reasonably good 2020 despite the corona situation, whereas other campsites had one of the worst years ever. In 2021, campsites in the sunny south, the high north and the far east all expect to have a reasonably normal holiday season. It is notable that German campsites, in particular, have a less positive view of the coming season than their colleagues in other countries. Furthermore, many campsites indicate they have had many heart-warming initiatives and messages of support from their guests this past year. Turnover in 2020 and revenue prognosis for 2021



We asked all campsites included in this article about their turnover figures in 2020 compared to those in 2019. And about the expected turnover for 2021 compared to that in 2019. Per campsite, this is visually presented with a value between very bad (furthest left) and very good (furthest right).

Neset Camping, Byglandsfjord **



For us, the 2020 camping season was the best season ever. Fortunately, there were only three corona infections in our region throughout the year, so our guests felt safe and comfortable. It is important that everyone takes the corona crisis seriously and considers others. Just like it is extremely important to keep everything clean with anti-bacterial cleaning products. We clean everything more frequently and we maintain the recommended distance everywhere. This coming season, we expect to see many Norwegian guests at our campsite again. And weather permitting, we think we will welcome many foreign guests again too.

2020

2021

'The year 2020 was the best season ever'

Hereit Ranua Zoo Camping, Ranua

It took until the summer of 2020 for us to see an increase in guest numbers. The rest of the season was of course disappointing. We paid a lot of attention to cleaning and disinfecting the campsite grounds.

'We have to take good care of each other'

We also constantly reminded our guests of the importance of keeping distance, washing hands and using a face mask. Thankfully, we met many campers who didn't know about us before or who had visited us in the past. An important lesson from recent times is that we have to take good care of each other. For the new year, we hope to have an active camping season in our beautiful region.



Hevi Camping, Stöllet

In part due to CampingCard ACSI, we have been a strong European oriented campsite for years. Our guests come from at least 11 European countries. That market almost completely collapsed. So, we were incredibly pleased to welcome lots more Swedish guests last year. They played a big part in saving our season. We expect those holiday makers will return in the coming years, which is a positive consequence of the corona pandemic. Besides which, we were able to tackle the crisis situation rather well. Because we have worked with targets a lot in recent years we are used to thinking in terms of solutions. That served us well.



Horsens City Camping, Horsens

'Guests saw that we made the best of the situation'

We had a very bad spring with few guests. The guests returned from mid-June. The result: we were completely full in summer, mainly with Danish guests. We normally start the season with a joint Easter breakfast, but we couldn't this time. Instead, we guest. Guests saw how we tried to make the best of the situation. In the past period, we learned that we were fairly good at adapting to new circumstances. We have high expectations for the coming season, certainly now the Danish have seen the charm of camping in their own country.

made a free bag with breakfast for every

Ardoer Camping De Heldense Bossen, Helden



'Hopefully, the autumn can help make up for some of the losses'

Recreatiepark De Leistert, *Roggel*



The campsite was empty during the entire early season. It wasn't until around Ascension and Pentecost that we had



'We tackled the corona crisis rather well'







Marcel Timmermans

The early season in 2020 fell through. In contrast, the summer was good, but it couldn't compensate for the earlier losses. To keep things going on the right path, we installed additional toilet and shower

units at our campsite, you could only swim for 90 minutes a day and there was the least possible personal contact at reception. Thankfully, guests understood that we couldn't do anything about the situation either. Last year showed us that we are in fact far too dependent on the government, both in positive and negative terms. Hopefully, we can do more in the run up to summer this year and a good autumn would help a lot.



Angelique Joosten 👔

more opportunities with private toilet and washing facilities, glamping tents and we hired other forms of accommodation. But all to a limited extent. We therefore lost a considerable amount of turnover in 2020. By keeping the rates

'We can take a knock or two. Together, we can do it'

for 2021 the same as those for 2020 for a long period, we made it very attractive to guests to book. It was greatly appreciated. The corona situation has shown us that we are a solid organisation and that we can take a knock or two. Together, we can do it! Despite our optimism, we have moderate expectations for this year because we have already lost part of the early season.



Camping Houtum, *Kasterlee*

The first lockdown was hard to swallow. We wondered what the year would bring. And what our financial situation would be if we missed the most important camping periods, such as Easter, Ascension and Pentecost. Fortunately, we had a good summer because Belgians (re) discovered camping in their own country. And we regularly heard that guests were pleasantly surprised at how beautiful Belgium actually is! Sometimes, a crisis can also be an opportunity. Because as only domestic tourism was allowed for a lengthy period, we gained many new fans. And that is why we also expect to see many Belgians at our campsite again this year.



'Sometimes, a crisis can also be an opportunity'

Europacamping Nommerlayen, Nommern

As we are a large campsite with a lot of staff, we decided not to open until 1 June 2020. It meant we lost part of the low season in spring. After that, the high season

'It always works out in the end'

started slowly because German and Belgian guests were not allowed to travel to Luxembourg. That resulted in many cancellations. The late season wasn't great either due to the worsening situation around the pandemic. Thankfully, we had a lot of support from guests who sent us chocolates and flowers, for example, or gave extra tips. That did us good. We are trying to stay positive and not give up. It always works out in the end.





NordseeCamping in Lee, Westerdeichstrich

Of course, 2020 was an exceptional year, with a season that only started in May and ran until October. When we were allowed to welcome guests, they were really happy. There were actually very few cancellations even

2021



though the toilet and washing facilities had to remain closed at the beginning. Our hygiene rules worked well and they were followed to the letter. We think that is the way to combat this crisis. It is of course also understandable that campsites in Germany are at the back of the queue when it comes to relaxing the measures. That makes us pessimistic about the 2021 camping season. Fortunately, the long-term prospects are better!



Strandcamping Waging am See, Waging am See



'We are looking to the future with confidence'

During the corona crisis, we looked at what adjustments we could make to meet the guests' wishes as far as possible. Consider more relaxed cancellation conditions, an online entertainment programme and a private beach exclusively for campers. That got us many positive reactions from the guests. We also got support from guests in that many declined the refund of their down payment for cancelled bookings. If one thing has become clear to us this past year it is the importance of flexible booking terms and conditions for our customers. Because camping is only increasing in popularity, we have confidence in the future.



Campingplatz Moselhöhe, Heidenburg

Sadly, we suffered extreme losses in turnover because we opened later than usual. And we couldn't recoup our losses during the months we were able to welcome guests. But the joy on our guests' and

our faces when we reopened was fantastic. To give something back to our guests, because they couldn't camp the entire season, we decided not to raise the prices in 2020. The guests appreciated that. The corona crisis has taught us that you should never take life and your health for granted.

'We decided not to raise the prices'





AZUR Campingpark

We had a tough time until our campsites opened in June 2020. But we can be extremely pleased with months that followed. However, we consider the closure since November 2020 that is still ongoing today completely unacceptable. By setting up more flexible booking procedures and cancellation conditions and focusing more on online bookability, we have been able to accommodate our guests. Last year, we learned how crisis man-

'We have to fight for our survival'

agement works and we are fighting for our campsites' survival. Things can't continue the way they are now. We also think the accommodation branch is being disproportionately punished. Our future is still extremely uncertain.

AlpenCamping, Meiringen

Fortunately, we had an exceptional year last year. We couldn't open until 6 June and yet we still met our 2019 figures. What we have noticed since 2020 is that in Switzerland, we are considered more an accommodation provider and less of a leisure and spa facility. Many guests told us how thankful they were that we were open. Incredibly positive. But what we also learned is that (local) politics can be rather unpredictable in terms of policy. Despite that, we expect 2021 to be a good year.





'We expect 2021 will be a good year'



Alpenferienpark Reisach, Reisach

We received many cancellations and changes to reservation dates last year. There was also a 20% drop in the number of overnight stays. In the case of cancellations, we offered guests the option to postpone the booking to the following year (at no additional cost). Fortunately, many campers took advantage of that offer. My heart was warmed by the gestures of many regular guests of the accommodation who decided not to transfer their deposit to next year but to pay a new deposit. The corona situation has really taught us to be flexible.

'We really learned to be flexible'



Camping Leiputrija, Adazu Nov.



As a quiet campsite in Latvia, we mainly rely on foreign travellers and we saw fewer of those in 2020. There was a 'Baltic Bubble', but camping is not so commonplace here that we received

'We are highly dependent on foreign travellers'

many local campers. In the end, we only did well from mid-June to mid-August. Considering the large dependence on foreign guests - and the rather fickle policy in Europe - it's hard for us to make a prognosis for 2021. Latvia has plenty to offer in terms of countryside and space, but travellers have to be able to get here.

VERY BAD VERY GOOD 2020 2021

Erlebnis Comfort Camping Aufenfeld, Aufenfeld

In the spring of 2020, we lost three months of earnings. And we lost the entire winter season (from September). We had to deal with dissatisfied customers due to the many cancellations. So we offered special cancellation terms and conditions. We also came up with discounts for regular customers and all kinds of special offers. Lovely gesture: a customer declined their

'The loyalty of our guests and staff is wonderful'

deposit to help us in this difficult time. And it is wonderful to see the loyalty of our guests and staff. Despite a difficult start to 2021, we are optimistic about having a good high season.







Camping Alexa, Chlapowo

Last year was chaotic with many cancellations and deferred bookings. We also saw many campers who were on holiday with their caravan or motorhome for the first time. They sometimes needed

'We have seen many "new campers"'

help setting up the awning or turning on the heating, but we were more than happy to help. To make sure everything ran smoothly, we increased the size of the camping pitches and did a lot of extra cleaning and disinfecting. We won't readily forget the happy faces of everyone who was finally allowed outside again. Hopefully, this season will be slightly better than the previous season. We are prepared for anything!



Camping Sokol Praha, Praha 9/Dolní Pocernice

Last year, 2020, was a real challenge for us. That was due to the constant unpredictability surrounding the corona situation. It became clear to always expect the unexpected. The domestic camping market in the Czech Republic is quite small which means many campsites depend on foreign visitors. They did go to campsites in the countryside, but as a city campsite in a suburb of Prague, it was hard for us. But by relaxing our policy regarding bookings, down payments and cancellations, we did attract some customers. They often said they were pleasantly surprised about the relaxed atmosphere at a city campsite so close to the centre of Prague.

VERY BAD

2020 ---

2021



'In 2020, we learned to always expect the unexpected'

Examping Bled, Bled

Due to lockdown, we were closed until 12 June 2020, while we usually open on 1 April. Because there was so much confusion surrounding closed borders, our reservations department was extremely busy with cancellations, rebookings and booking confirmations. Once the border restrictions were finally lifted, we had a successful summer season. And in the end, the turnover was comparable with that in 2019. The corona situation has brought us closer together.



Zaton Holiday Resort, Zaton/Nin (Zadar)

'The support from our guests really helped us through'

VERY GOOD

Compared with our record year in 2019, we saw a drastic drop in turnover in 2020. In particular, we had fewer guests from our most important countries, such as the Netherlands, Denmark and Italy. The corona measures meant we had to organise our business operations differently. But it was all worthwhile, because it meant we could keep welcoming guests. The hundreds of e-mails and heart-warming reactions on social media also helped us through the difficult season. We noticed that even a pandemic cannot stop travellers, so hopefully rapid tests and vaccinations will help to turn 2021 around.

The fact we had a successful summer season was a real team effort. This year, we expect to be able to open the campsite before the summer season and that we will have a good year.



'The corona situation has brought us closer together'





www.ACSI.eu

Camping Stobreč Split, Stobrec



The turbulent year of 2020 was filled with challenges. It demanded an overhaul of our organisation. Certainly with all the cancellations and transferred bookings to 2021. Additionally, it was important that we adjusted our hygiene rules to meet

'The turbulent year of 2020 was filled with challenges'

all the measures. The tourism sector was different from normal. The number of domestic overnight stays increased. If anything has become clear it is that health and safety were priorities when customers booked a holiday. For 2021, we expect many last-minute reservations, partly due to the vaccination policy and the arrival of better weather.



'We opened our swimming pool to local guests'

Camp Sojka, *Malatíny*



Our campsite did not open in 2020 at all. Indeed, we not only suffered due to the corona situation, but we also had to cope with flooding in the spring. So, it was a truly disastrous year. Thankfully, we received many messages of support from guests on our social media channels. They were really great to read! Last year was therefore mainly about staying calm, limiting costs and preparing for a new start. We are optimistic and hoping for a good summer and good autumn in 2021.





🔀 Camping Mali Wimbledon, Mostar

The coronavirus had a massive impact. In 2020, we only had 10 campers. Fortunately, we have a large swimming pool which we opened to local guests. We placed additional pumps with disinfectant in the toilet and washing facilities and we thoroughly clean everything. We received positive responses from our guests and fortunately we also received support from our partners, such as ACSI. Lately, we have learned to be flexible and to quickly switch to a back-up plan. And although we expect more possibilities in 2021, we think there will still be many restrictive measures. VERV BAD VERV GOOD



Camping Erodios, *Gialova/Pylos*

Last year, we had many last-minute cancellations. Thankfully, it didn't take us long to find a way to deal with the situation. We took our camping guests' temperature and we started taking online orders for our restaurant and campsite shop. We got a lot of support from our regular guests who unfortunately could no longer come to Greece. We hope to be able to welcome them again very soon. Everyone's health is our highest priority this coming season too. If everyone takes the situation seriously, we can hopefully enjoy a safe summer.



'Health is the highest priority this coming season'

Erwion Caravan & Camping Park, *Liandovery*



'We had to close for the first time since the 1960s'

In 2020, we were closed until July and to make matters worse, we had to close again in autumn and winter. It was the first time since the 1960s that the park had to stay closed! We survived thanks to government support. Fortunately, we already had high standards of hygiene and maintenance, so the adjustments we had to make were minimal in that regard. In 2021, we will apply the same procedures as last year. We expect that the number of guests will improve. We are taking into account that we will have fewer foreign guests but more British who will spend their holiday in their own country (out of necessity).

Camping Kalami Beach, Plataria/Igoumenitsa

'Many campers were of course scared of the virus'



Last year, we clearly received fewer guests. Many campers were of course scared of the virus. At the campsite, we made sure that it was easy for everyone to keep distance from each other, and we placed pumps with disinfectant at many spots. We also reduced the number of tables in the restaurant. The pandemic has taught us to overcome difficult situations and to be flexible with our working methods. As more and more people are vaccinated and everyone is hopefully more aware of the dangers of corona, we hope for a better camping season in 2021.







Camping La Belle Étoile, *La Rochette*



Last year, we unfortunately had a loss of about 50% because we couldn't welcome any foreign guests. We invested more in hygiene for the guests who did stay at our campsite. For instance, we purchased a machine to disinfect the mobile homes and toilet and washing facilities. It was lovely that some of our regular guests even called to ask how the campsite was doing.

'Some customers even called us to ask how it was going'

And there were those who cancelled their holiday but didn't want their

deposit back. That was lovely to see. We have no idea what 2021 is going to bring but we are optimistic about 2022; provided the vaccine strategy is a success.



Camping Biarritz, Biarritz

Unfortunately, the lack of foreign guests at our campsite had economic consequences. But in order to make it even safer for the guests who did stay with us, we invested in hygiene of course. We followed all the health protocols. For instance, we worked with take-away meals so that we could at least still offer food.



'Luckily, we had help from our campsite chain'

Luckily, we had help from Airotel, the campsite chain we are affiliated to. The crisis has taught us some wise lessons. Such as that it is important to invest in attracting domestic tourists. And conducting customer surveys proved highly informative to find out more about their wishes.

Camping Le Pont d'Allagnon, Lempdes-sur-Allagnon



At the start of the season we had about 20% fewer French and foreign customers. That was followed by group cancellations in the high and low seasons. The reopening of the campsite in June was an immense help to us. That enabled us to make up much of our losses in the two summer months. The corona crisis has shown us that you have to be cautious about spending money and that it is important to reassure customers about the booking terms and conditions. We don't really have expectations for the future, but we do hope that in the high season, we will be able to welcome tourists from countries other than France.

'It is important to reassure guests'

Domaine de la Gautière, Buis-les-Baronnies

Running our campsite in times of corona demanded a different approach in order to guarantee our customers' and our wellbeing. For example, people had to wear face masks in some places, we had walking routes to reception, and we worked with special cleaning products. And not without results, guests said they felt safer here than at other campsites. In the future, we will certainly keep up with the additional hygiene measures such as frequent hand washing. COVID has taught us to protect ourselves against an invisible enemy. We hope to be able to welcome Dutch, German and Belgian campers again this year.



'Guests felt safer here than at other campsites'

VERY GOOD VERY BAD 2020 ---2021

Camp du Domaine, Bormes-les-Mimosas

Last year, we had a loss of turnover of 37%, mainly suffered in the low season. We did have more French guests and more new customers than usual. They were extremely safe at our campsite due to all the tightened measures. For example, a dedicated team disinfected all amenities three times a day. We also prevented crowds at the entertainment by holding two evening shows instead of one (7-9pm, disinfect, 9.30-11.30 pm). Fun fact, last year we had two famous guests at our campsite: a French footballer from the team that became world champions in 2018 and a German film actor.

VERY GOOD





'A team disinfected all amenities three times a day'

VERY BAD VERY GOOD 2020 2021

Camping La Buganvilla, Marbella/Málaga



We took the measures communicated to us by the Spanish Ministry of Public Health. In other words: keeping distance, wearing face masks and making disinfectant gel available. As far as we know, there was not a single case of corona, not among the customers, nor the staff.

VERY BAD

2020

2021

Verneda Camping Mountain Resort, Pont d'Arros

'It is important to build customer lovaltv'

Unfortunately, we were closed up to June 2020. And in the winter, too, there were also all kinds of travelling restric-

'As far as we know we didn't have a single case of corona'

Recently, we have become really aware that we have to respect the most vulnerable in these times of corona. This year, we expect a better summer than we had in 2020. And hopefully, from this autumn, we can once again welcome the North Europeans who stay for winter.



tions in our province. Add to that the obligatory 20% reduction in guest numbers. Meant of course, to better maintain distance. The corona crisis has taught us that we should appreciate the moment. And that it is important to build customer loyalty. In terms of domestic tourism, 2021 should be okay. We don't really have confidence that we will see foreign guests because of all the delays in vaccinations.



Cepo Verde, Gondesende/Bragança



We had hardly any foreign guests last year. Add to that, an increase in costs related to all the safety measures. This meant our overall income decreased by about 50 per cent. By creating special rules related to using the toilet and washing facilities, we could guarantee our guests a safe stay. It was really lovely that a couple from England stayed for a long

'The corona period was a learning experience'

time in one of our chalets – even when the rest of the campsite was empty - to help increase our income. We had several great weeks together. The corona period was a learning experience. We had to keep ourselves afloat with few resources.

VERY BAD	VERY GOOD	
2020 ————		
2021 ——●		

Camping Turiscampo, Luz/Lagos

'It was good that they managed to find our campsite all of a sudden'



The lockdown, in particular, had a big impact on our campsite. There was hardly anything to do in July and August. The few guests who did come were other nationalities than we've seen in recent years. It was good that they managed to find our campsite all of a

sudden. By paying extra attention to hygiene and to the maximum number of people at certain places at the campsite, our guests were safe. It was also important to us that they felt safe. We have no idea what this year will bring. There will still be issues with flights and the political situation is an uncertain factor.



📕 📕 Gruppo Human Company



'We think 2021 will be similar to 2020'

Last year, we saw how much influence external factors can have on the tourism branch. We were forced to adapt quickly. We allocated our sales budget differently, gave our staff additional training, changed the infrastructure and introduced an online booking system for the restaurants and deliveries. And we paid extra attention to cleaning and hygiene. It is in part due to that, that our guests could still enjoy a nice holiday. We also noticed people were understanding of the measures. We think 2021 will be similar to 2020. Therefore, a reduction in international demand and many last-minute bookings.



Villaggio Turistico Internazionale, *Bibione*



'We are counting on recovery from the month of June'

The corona pandemic threw all

Camping San Cristoforo / Camping Due Laghi / Fiemme Village, Pergine Valsugana / Levico Terme / Bellamonte di Predazzo

Indeed, 2020 was a difficult year. The season was shorter than usual and we decided to only open two of the three campsites. We have paused all investments for the time being and that is sadly still the case. After the fiasco with the vouchers, it also became clear that we will have to make changes regarding down payments for holidays. People are hesitant about this. Since vaccinations are not proceeding quickly enough in many European countries we expect to mainly see domestic tourists in the 2021 season. Although of course, there will be a state of euphoria as soon as people can travel again.









'We have paused all investments for the time being'

Baia Domizia Camping Village, Baia Domizia In 2020, we saw a loss of turnover and a drop in the number of

certainties up in the air. Suddenly, we had to completely change our working methods and it rained cancellations and changed bookings. We drew up a new ad hoc business

plan with clear procedures for cleaning, entertainment, reception and social distancing. It meant we could offer our guests a safe and hygienic environment. Fortunately, we found the guests to be very understanding. In terms of turnover, we expect 2021 will fall somewhere between 2019 and 2020. The corona measures will undoubtedly play a big part in the first months. We hope to see a recovery from June.



'The year 2021 will be largely comparable with 2020

Luckily, our guests responded positively to the adaptations and they were good at following the rules. We expect the year 2021 to be largely comparable with 2020.







Building a strong campsite brand

An interview with Hannes Müller from TourTouch

piste erreichen | giste begeistern

Who is TourTouch? Could you briefly introduce yourself?

At TourTouch, we love camping and the outdoor life. It is from that passion that we contribute to strengthening the camping sector. Our strength lies in digitisation, experience and business operations. A new generation of campers are on their way and we are convinced they need two things: quick access to 'the product' and an authentic camping experience. TourTouch supports campsites in Germany, Austria and Switzerland with marketing, business operations and customer experience. Together with our customers, every day we face the challenges of a changing camping market created by the new generation of campers. And recently of course. the effect of the coronavirus.

What has your company done this past year when we mainly worked online?

The camping sector continues to develop despite the coronavirus. A number of campsites have used this period to make improvements. So, we had plenty to do. As such, we set up an online learning portal: the CAMPUS. On the portal, campsites can view presentations, interviews and tutorials about the sector's most important themes. This interesting information is available to all for free on **tourtouch.de/campus** (information in German).

This year, TourTouch gave a successful presentation during the virtual North German Camping Day (NCT) about building a strong camping brand. It included three important elements: building a brand, positioning a brand and specialised marketing. Can you explain that?

To build a brand, you first need a brand. That sounds logical, but it's not as simple as you might initially think. A brand should be presented in a consistent and standardised manner. You can present it using a logo, design and (set) colours, for instance. On top of that, a campsite also makes certain promises about the holiday and the quality customers can expect. That requires business operations that can live up to those promises. And that is a stumbling block for many campsites and one we can help them with. It's easy to find great slogans and images of brilliant holidays. But it is a challenge to maintain the high level of service from the time of booking to the end of the holiday. And certainly if a campsite needs to keep an eye on the costs.

Building a brand:

- Consistent and professional presentation
- Promises about the holiday and quality
- Corresponding professional business operations

Once a campsite's brand is established, the next challenge arises: positioning the brand. The campsite can use the following resources for that: their own website, 'Google My Business' and camping portals.

Positioning a brand:

- Own website
- Google My Business
- Campsite portals

First, it is important not to underestimate the importance of a good website for your business. It can make it a lot easier for the reception if customers can already find answers to practical questions online. That requires a modern website with a simple and clear navigation structure. That website must of course be easy to find in the search engines and ensure that visitors get in the mood to go camping. The customer must also



Good photos of the campsite are also part of building a strong brand, but the real challenge is to maintain a high level of service

have easy access to your product: reserving or booking a place. In Google My Business, campsite owners manage news, opening hours and reviews. They can also use it to change the listing in Google Maps. Furthermore, it is important to have a good presentation on the large campsite portals such as Eurocampings.eu and Camping.info. That means good images and current information.

Once a campsite has created a strong brand and achieved good online visibility, we would advise them to specialise the marketing. What does that entail?

Through specialisation, the campsite ensures the brand is seen by the right audience. This is about using the right channels, a specialised target group approach and campaigns with a clear objective. Those objectives are business based: optimum occupation, price acceptance, customer satisfaction and extending the camping season.

Specialised marketing:

- Channels and content
- Target groups
- Campaigns

One final question: In your opinion, what challenges await the camping sector in the coming years?

We believe that the most important thing is to align the range of accommodation and recreation with the new generation of campers. Online bookability, specialisation and offering constant high quality play a key role in that. We think the emphasis will probably shift even more towards a supplementary range of recreation, courses, workshops and experience. Details about the size of and amenities at the camping pitch, for example, will become less relevant. These developments require time and resources in business operations. But if a campsite has properly digitised many common processes, such as booking, checking in and paying, they have more time for contact with the guests. Then guests can come to you for excursion tips and additional services.

Thank you for your time and contribution.

You're welcome. Thanks for having me and good luck.



Hannes Müller, www.tourtouch.de

Hannes Müller is director of the marketing & strategy consultancy agency TourTouch and founder of the CAMPUS information portal.

I am curious to know about your business and the challenges ahead. Please feel free to send me a message at: hannes@tourtouch.de

Press Release LeadingCampings April 2021

Online tutorials and training

Since 2009, LeadingCampings of Europe has held a training session for the staff of member campsites every year before the start of the season. Until now, it has always taken place at a different LeadingCamping. The 2020 training fell victim to the first lockdown and the travel restrictions, now the LeadingCampings have reoriented themselves. On 22 April, this year's training took place in an online format - with the great advantage of a significantly increased number of participants. Obviously, if there is no need to travel and be away for several days, more staff can take part. And when the campsites are closed, more staff members have time for training. The experience of three and a half hours of intensive Zoom sessions shows: it can be done, but it is different. So, in addition to a lot of things we would rather get rid of today than tomorrow, Corona also brought something that will stay: The LeadingCampings head office has used the time to make staff training more permanent and to add a lasting online offering. What was initially born out of necessity during the pandemic will now be a permanent part of our training offer to staff at LeadingCampings. 24/7 they can inform themselves about everything concerning LeadingCampings. For this purpose, all relevant documents are now clearly sorted and available as an online database as well as initially four 30-minute video tutorials on Leading-specific topics. This tutorial video library is to grow in the future. Employees have access 365 days a year via https://academy.leadingcampings.com, but they have to register first.

More Information:

LeadingCampings of Europe Kettelerstr 26, D-40593 Düsseldorf Phone: +49 (0)2 11 / 89 96 49 95 Fax: +49 (0)2 11 / 87 96 49 96 info@leadingcampings.com www.leadingcampings.com



Benefit from digital tools

The balance between humans and computers

Digital booking is the future or, should we say, is already a reality. But that does not mean that campers are at the mercy of technology when booking. Humans - fortunately - play a key role and make all the difference between a one-time guest and a loyal customer. It is therefore extremely important to find an optimum balance between humans and computers.

Comparing, choosing and booking a holiday is increasingly taking place online. This development will probably continue to grow towards a fully personalised offer. In 2021, customers are increasingly getting used to providing their preferences and seeing offers that meet their wishes. For campsites

it has become almost imperative to respond to this. And yet, there do appear to be limits to digitisation. Because resistance arises in places where the human factor has completely disappeared.

Human contact From European and American

surveys, it appears that no less than 75% of consumers also want quick contact with a human while booking. And in the long run, excessive 'DIY technology' has a negative effect on travellers' experiences and loyalty. This appears to mainly be the case when there is no human back-up present, while people request it. Campers want to be able to quickly chat to someone by phone, WhatsApp, chat or e-mail. That provides a relationship of trust and creates a bond.



Difficult balancing act

It is a difficult balancing act for those who thought that fully digitising the booking process would be a solution to staffing costs and the lack of suitable staff. Using and sharing data are also focal points. Travellers do not consider it a problem to share their data with travel organisations. And certainly not when it gives them direct benefits. But it can evoke resistance if customers do not know which parties their data is shared with.

Tips from the chatbot

However, the right digital tools can indeed save money and time. Strong online visibility and a well-developed website (or app) with a simple booking process are important for every campsite and travel company. Yet, digitisation can go a step further and even generate turnover. Consider, for example, a chatbot that gives suggestions for fun activities and

Digital assistant at Suncamp

Tour operator Suncamp has been working with a digital assistant, Anna, since 2020. Customers register before their departure and Anna gives them handy tips and information. They can also ask the digital assistant questions through WhatsApp, for example 'Is there a nice restaurant nearby?' Customers who have used Anna in 2020, rate this service very highly. No less than 97% would want to receive tips from Anna again during their next holiday.

ACSI widgets: show your website visitors that you stand for quality



Recognisable quality mark for millions of campers The ACSI logo is a quality mark and is highly recognisable for millions of campers across Europe. By placing the ACSI logo on your website, you show visitors your

You can download three types of widgets:

- 1. ACSI rating
 - 2. ACSI logo widget



tourist attractions at the holiday destination or that can book a table at a restaurant for the customer. Guests who use a good digital assistant may spend up to 30 per cent more during their holiday than guests who don't.

Searching for the mix

Smart parties are therefore looking for ways to combine digitisation with human contact moments. That can be fairly easy. Simply supplying a telephone number or offering a chat option with a staff member can help win the customers' confidence. Smart chatbots go a step further and even recognise emotions, whereby they can respond to feelings such as anger, surprise or stress. It is still a challenge to figure out the right mix between humans and computers. But there is one clear conclusion: the value of human contact should not be underestimated!

As an ACSI campsite, you have the possibility to place an ACSI widget on your website. This enables you to take full advantages of ACSI as a quality mark. A widget is a small, graphic element that you can easily add to your website and which contains useful information for website visitors. For example, the ACSI logo or the rating you receive from campers who have posted a review on our websites or through our apps.

valuable collaboration with ACSI. That gives your future guests confidence.

Display your campsite reviews Besides the ACSI logo, the reviews of your campsite are also important to your future campsite guests. By displaying the ACSI rating on your website, with a link to the reviews, you help guests choose your campsite.

Compile your own widget Widgets are free to use, and they are easy to compile.

ACSI logo widget + inspection year



ACSI Widgets:

- Extremely easy to compile
- Easy to place on your website
- High attention value for visitors
- Show that you collaborate with ACSI

Staff	
Price - quality comparison	
Camping pitch 8.0	
Accommodation 8.0	
Child friendliness 7.8	
Entertainment 7.9	
Sports facillities 7.6	
Swimming pool 7.7	
Food and drink 8.0	
Surroundings 8.6	
Add a review	
Appuelly	

inspected

by ACSI

For more information, go to Eurocampings.co.uk/widget

ACSI

Creative concept with impact ACSI FreeLife TestTour 2021

Campers who stay alongside one another at a campsite know better than anyone what's important for a caravan or tow car. It is therefore befitting that campers play a leading role in the ACSI FreeLife TestTour. Let's look at what it entails and what it can mean for your campsite.

Last summer during a period of low levels of corona, four test teams travelled to the sunny south of Austria: Carinthia. For that, they were given a brand-new towing combination from Volvo and Fendt. This led the teams to having numerous conversations with enthusiastic camping neighbours. And both the region as well as the campsites where the test teams spent the nights benefitted from the great exposure in all the stories told through extensive reports, blogs and dozens of videos.

Creative concepts

Regions are increasingly approaching ACSI for creative communication solutions with a mix of print, online and video. Therefore, the creators of ACSI FreeLife magazine regularly conceive new concepts to offer more than just adverts. From readers' trips to special camping package deals and from informative spreads presenting campsites to interviews with campsite owners. The biggest of all these creative concepts is the ACSI FreeLife TestTour, which we are organising for the fifth time in 2021. For the tour, we work with a tourism region, a car manufacturer and a caravan and/or motorhome manufacturer. That collaboration is also the strength of the concept.

Test teams

ACSI FreeLife is the brand within Europe's camping specialist ACSI which provides camping lovers

with camping information and inspiration. In a positive and pleasant way, the editorial team uses online and offline resources to show you where you can go camping and, above all, the equipment you need to make it as comfortable as possible for yourself. For the ACSI FreeLife TestTour, we have four test teams; each with a specific camping profile so that every ACSI FreeLife reader can recognise themselves in one of them. Using profiling, we can assess which trip and which car and caravan combination suits them best. For example, consider a test team of bon vivants, who are always ready for relaxation and culinary adventures. Or a test team of active adventurers, for whom no mountain is too high. Also a family, and a team of cul-

Impact

ture lovers.

During the TestTour, we record the teams' adventures and experiences through background articles, ambience reports, videos, photos, vlogs and social media posts. The aim of the project is to capture authentic and inspiring images and stories and to achieve the greatest possible reach over a long period. For the Carinthia Test-Tour, for instance, we made four separate files which we placed in various editions. A complete story line per edition in which we shared travel experiences, as well as experiences with the caravan and car.



Facts & Figures

- The ACSI FreeLife TestTour has been organised four times
 Four test teams test four items of new camping equipment
- 25 videos
- 24 blogs
- 40 Facebook posts
- 92 pages in ACSI FreeLife magazines
- From all the stories, we make a mini magazine devoted to the TestTour, which we send with the ACSI Campinggids Europa. The circulation is 47,000
- With that, we reach over
- 2,500,000 Dutch-speaking campers

Collaboration

In 2021, we will be travelling with four test teams to the Swiss region of Bern. It promises to be another spectacular trip. If the concept or other options for collaborating with ACSI FreeLife magazine have sparked your interest, please feel free to contact us by sending a mail to our colleague Mariëlle Dekkers-Vruggink at mdekkers@acsi.eu.



The four camper profiles

The Culture Lovers Test Team

For the culture lovers, a camping holiday is not complete without immersing themselves in the region's history. A monument, a historical city centre, local customs, everything that characterises the region grabs their attention. Taking in culture is in their genes and that is why this team drives an unconventional motorhome or an authentic car and caravan combination.



The Active Adventurers Test Team

The test team of active adventurers travels with a compact caravan or motorhome. They always take their bikes on holiday. As long as this team can enjoy active outdoor activities, they are happy. The team prefers to camp at a campsite where they can go any which way on the cycling or hiking routes. A day lazing around in front of the caravan is really not their thing.



The Bon Vivants Test Team

For this team, camping is all about anything goes, but nothing's a must. The team does everything in their own time. The bon vivants decide the destination for their camping trip based on the campsites. After all, they must be luxurious and have extensive amenities such as a good restaurant. This team enjoys luxury and knows how to appreciate the good things in life.





The Family Campers Test Team

For the team of family campers, it is important that the children have a good time. Because if they are enjoying themselves, Mum and Dad can also have a nice holiday. And of course, the caravan or motorhome the family take on the road is also equipped with all kinds of conveniences to make family life even more pleasurable.



Where will we be going camping this summer?

The inspiration stage when choosing a camping destination

So much changed in the past year of corona. One of the consequences of the pandemic was the cancellation of all holiday and camping trade fairs. And the end is not yet in sight. National and regional tourist offices had to make big changes. What are the alternatives?

The holiday and camping trade fairs at the start of the year are traditionally the place where many tourist offices are present to get in touch with campers who are orientating themselves for the coming holidays. They are at a stage when they want to be pleasantly surprised and want to get new ideas. From March 2020, almost all fairs were cancelled and that left many marketers in the holiday countries and regions wondering how they could tell campers their stories and when to communicate them, while it is still unclear when we will be able to travel internationally again.

Being visible, even though travel is (still) not possible In recent months, ACSI has been inundated with requests from countries and regions that are wrestling with the question of what they should do next. In all conversations, we advised them to make sure they are visible to campers, now more than ever. Recent ACSI surveys under over 24,000 European campers indicate that everyone wants to get out and about again, also abroad. It is therefore important now in particular to inspire campers, who are eager to go on holiday, with your story.

Campsite owners as ambassadors for their region

As a campsite owner, you know like no other about your region's special features and you convey that pride: on your campsite's website, in your brochures and on the spot with all kinds of activities. Moreover, we are increasingly seeing that campsite owners are active in the regional tourist offices or with their campsite federation. Because not all countries acknowledge the importance of camping holidays for tourism. Luckily, more and more regions are seeing its increasing importance. ACSI has since set up successful campaigns with 17 regions across Europe.

A plan for every budget

Also, five regions in Europe have been visited in the ACSI FreeLife TestTour, resulting in fabulous video images, reports and a massive reach in Dutch-speaking regions. But also for smaller budgets, we often find suitable communication methods with the tourist offices and campsite federations so that campers pick your region. It is an important step to get them to your campsite. If you would like to know more, please call +31 (0)488 452055 or send a mail

+31 (0)488 452055 or send a mail to sales@acsi.eu.

Colophon

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ACSI on Dutch television

ACSI aims to get everyone enthusiastic about camping, also in times of corona. After all, camping means relaxation, enjoying the countryside and having a safe holiday. And in 2020 and 2021 we were able to show that to millions of Dutch viewers on the programmes RTL Kampeert and Camp to Go. A good way to get people enthusiastic. programmes' presenters travelled to the best holiday destinations. And ACSI joined them! They could, for example, check out Camping De Paal, Camping El Delfin Verde and Camping Beerze Bulten. From the comfort of their home, viewers could discover how fun and relaxing camping can be. RTL Kampeert had about 1 million viewers per episode and Camp to Go had a total of 6.5 million viewers!

News in brief

Campers cannot wait

Campers across Europe are eager to go camping again. Despite the fact that many countries still have strict corona measures in place, campsite specialist ACSI has had a record number of visitors to its websites. 'We expected that campers would be impatient to go to campsites this year. But after a very quiet winter, in recent weeks our websites have broken all visitor number records from 2019. And last week, the number of downloads of the app even increased by almost 120%. Campers clearly have confidence', states Ramon van Reine, CEO of ACSI.

Good booking terms and conditions are more important than vaccines

Surveys by ACSI's tour operator Suncamp have shown that favourable booking terms and conditions and a positive travel recommendation are considered more important when booking a camping holiday than the arrival of the vaccine. Of the Dutch, German and English customers surveyed, 77% indicated they were planning to go on a camping holiday this summer.

Camping trends in 2021

Getting viewers enthusiastic

From the Ardennes to Girona and from the Veluwe to Wallonia; the



Reaching a broad audience

ACSI is more than happy to take part in programmes like Camp to Go and RTL Kampeert. It is a fantastic way to show camping to a wide audience. By taking part, ACSI helps make these types of programmes possible. That is why you will be seeing ACSI on these programmes next season too.

- 1. The advance of camping Millennials
- 2. Going away abroad
- 3. Safe and healthy on holiday
- 4. Self-sufficient camping
- 5. Themed campsites

ACSI and TomTom are working together

ACSI's POIs (Points of Interest) were integrated into the TomTom GO Camper navigation system in the first quarter of 2020. Campers can instantly recognise ACSI campsites by the logo on the map and in the search results. Another aspect of the collaboration is the integration of TomTom Maps in several of ACSI's digital products. Furthermore, ACSI routes have been added to TomTom RoadTrips. That makes it even easier for campers to find the perfect campsite.

You can read more news on ACSI.eu.



Your marketing partner

for Europe

New ACSI camping.info Booking

-

Your European booking platform with 40 million visitors



ACSI Campsite guides

All annually inspected campsites will be included in various ACSI campsite guides which are on sale in several countries. In 2022, the total number of printed guides will be 701,500. You will benefit from even more promotion with an advertisement, including one in the ACSI online channels.

Eurocampings.eu

Your extensive campsite description will be displayed free of charge on Europe's most well-known camping website,



available in 14 languages. The visitors to Eurocampings.eu are your potential customers! If you wish your campsite to stand out even more and your listing to attract more potential campers, advertise on Eurocampings.eu.



ACSI-apps

Your extensive campsite description will also be placed for free in the ACSI Campsites Europe App. This app can be used both online and offline, and is available in 13 languages. You will also attract more attention as an advertiser.

The expected number of visitors

The expected number of visitors to the ACSI websites and the ACSI apps in 2021 is 22,400,000.

Check out all promotional opportunities on: **www.ACSI.eu**