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— MORE TIME FOR CARE —

Switzerland and its regional differences - a travelogue with a twinkle in the eye

Jan Binggeli, CSO

"When I started at SmartLiberty, I thought: «Oh, as a Swiss, I know Switzerland - four languages, lots of chocolate, clean trains, and all on time.» Sure, I also knew that every region has its own peculiarities - linguistic, cultural, culinary. But what I didn't know was that when it comes to call systems, Switzerland suddenly becomes a patchwork of technical idiosyncrasies and deeply rooted convictions."

In this blog post, we take you on a little (not entirely serious) journey through Switzerland - from west to east - and show you how differently our call system is received across the country. Without judgment, of course - we love all our regions. We really do. Most of the time.

From west to east - or in our case: from aperitif to specifications

SmartLiberty has grown up in French-speaking Switzerland. Our call and location system took off there like a glass of oeil de perdrix on a Friday evening on Lake Neuchâtel - fast, invigorating and with a certain freshness.

Surprising, actually: Western Switzerland is considered to be rather cozy and traditional. And yet many nursing homes there were open to switching to smartphones, digitalization and mobile call systems. Whether it was due to the many aperitifs that accompanied our demos or simply the esprit of the French-speaking people - we still don't know.

When we then started to roll out the system in German-speaking Switzerland, we realized: The journey was only just beginning. Because every valley, every hill and every language border had its own opinion on how our call and location system should work.

French-speaking Switzerland - access? Mais bien sûr!

In French-speaking Switzerland, if a door is closed, that doesn't mean it has to stay closed. Access control? Absolutely - but smart, please.

The resident badges are not only used for localization, but also as a key to a complex world of doors, lifts and automatic prioritization. A resident in the lift without authorization? No problem - the system knows which priority decides whether the lift starts or stops.

And then there was the desire to constantly locate employees - even without an active alarm. No problem in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, but in the German-speaking part of Switzerland it was often: "Why? I can call if I'm looking for someone." Efficiency vs. pragmatism - a never-ending story. Today we have deactivated this function for data protection reasons.

The Mittelland - where projects are supposed to tick like Swiss clocks

In the Mittelland, people are very aware of their center - also when it comes to expectations. Here, it was not enough to simply deliver a system and then say "on y va", No, here a project manager is expected to oversee the project from A to Z - including coordinating electricians, architects, technical services and the customer's project team.

Suddenly everyone wanted to see data sheets. Data sheets! We had to write them in the first place.

Things also got technical: instead of floor mats, motion detectors were used - intelligent sensor technology was suddenly the order of the day. And thanks to our digital mobile platform and our open interfaces, we were already equipped for this.

Nevertheless, communication with Mittelland went really well. There were no reservations about our origins in French-speaking Switzerland. And thanks to our openness and professionalism, we were soon able to win over larger groups such as Domicil in Bern (now Concara).

Central Switzerland - control is better

We thought: What works in the West and on the Central Plateau must surely also hit Central Switzerland like the first snow on the Stanserhorn.

Well. Wrong thinking.

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First of all: A salesperson with a French accent? No thanks. He was listened to politely - but that was it. So we needed local support. We hired a project manager and a sales consultant from the region, opened a temporary warehouse in Kriens - and lo and behold, suddenly everything was working.

But everything was put through its paces. Every radio frequency was measured, every antenna scrutinized: "Will this harm the sleep of our residents?" And: "Can it also be used to connect the retirement apartments next door?"

Spoiler: Today this is standard - back then it was pioneering work à la Central Switzerland.

Eastern Switzerland - when precision meets principles

With our long-standing sales consultant Frank Huber, we ventured into Eastern Switzerland. And quickly realized that we were not ready: We were not ready.

The customers in Eastern Switzerland had an attention to detail that was second to none. No comma was overlooked, no technical description went uncommented and all our contracts were rewritten.

And then there was the issue of language. Our support team still consisted of just a few people - and not all of them were bilingual. In Eastern Switzerland, it quickly became clear: "Well, if I have to speak extra French, I'd rather not."

As a result, we had to rethink our entire system - from documentation to the hotline to installation. Today, we have a broad customer base in Eastern Switzerland, dedicated support numbers and technical documentation that even makes engineers smile (ok - at least nod appreciatively).

Switzerland - A small country with a big vision

Our trip through Switzerland has shown us one thing: Digitalization in long-term care is not a sprint - it's an alpine tour.

Each region has its own rhythm, its own questions, its own (quite justified) concerns. But they are all pursuing the same goal: to improve the quality of life in care - with technology that works and relieves people.

And that's where we are today: with a system that survives aperitifs, passes performance specifications, masters radio analyses and is even understood in Eastern Switzerland. We are convinced that SmartLiberty adapts, regardless of whether it's in the East or the West. Not because we have to. But because we want to.

And because we know: If you want to be successful in Switzerland, you need more than just technology. You need understanding, patience - and sometimes just a good coffee with a view of the mountains.

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