

## A brief history

Lucerne, September 2010

## Swiss Museum of Transport

with Planetarium and Filmtheatre

**Open to discoverers!** The Swiss Museum of Transport shows the past, present and future development of transport and mobility on road, rail and water as well as in the air and space plus modern communication worlds in a tangible, exciting and diverse way. They form the core themes of the museum. More than 3000 objects on an exhibition area of some 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> are witnesses to a moving (in the truest sense of the word) history or point to future challenges in the fields of transport, mobility and communication.

Attractions found nowhere else in Switzerland such as the Filmtheatre, Planetarium, Swissarena and Gotthard Tunnel Show, as well as the Hans Erni Museum and many other interesting features make a visit to the Swiss Museum of Transport exciting and unforgettable. The Swiss Museum of Transport also incorporates a Congress Center as well as diverse food & beverage facilities to satisfy visitors' and guests' refreshment needs.

The Swiss Museum of Transport is a pleasurable and interest-packed place of discovery – surrounded by original contemporary witnesses to transport history! Opened on 1 July 1959 and now attracting over 927,000 visitors a year, the Swiss Museum of Transport is justly entitled to call itself the most-visited museum and one of the most popular excursion destinations in Switzerland.

### The Swiss Museum of Transport

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**How to get here** Bus 6, 8, 24, Verkehrshaus (Swiss Museum of Transport) stop  
Railway S3 and Voralpen Express, Lucerne Verkehrshaus stop  
Boat, Verkehrshaus-Lido stop  
Car, Swiss Museum of Transport, Lido car park

**Open:** Summertime 10.00 –18.00, wintertime 10.00 –17.00. Open 365 days a year!

***The Swiss Museum of Transport is run by the Swiss Museum of Transport Association which owns the building infrastructure. The collections – archive materials and historical objects – are the property of the Swiss Museum of Transport.***

***The Swiss Museum of Transport Association was originally founded in 1959 by SBB, Swissair and PTT together with private railways, transport organisations and other companies. The goal at the time was to establish a forum and showcase for transport and communication. Today the former patrons are sponsoring partners and the majority of association members are private persons (2009: 30,520). In contrast to other museums, the Swiss Museum of Transport is today largely self-supporting. Just under 10 per cent of the budget, amounting to around 24 million francs in 2009, is contributed by the public authorities. The majority is derived from the admission***

**receipts, shops and food & beverage operations, as well as from the sponsors. In 2009, the Swiss Museum of Transport employed around 200 staff and welcomed over 927,000 visitors.**

The Swiss Museum of Transport is today not only the most important technology museum but also the most visited museum in our country. Over the 50 years of its existence, a unique collection of historical objects and documents has been accumulated. These items are used to portray the development of transport and mobility in impressive temporary and permanent exhibitions. In addition to its successful and often exemplary exhibition activities, the Swiss Museum of Transport is highly respected on the international stage for its extremely high level of self-financing (around 90% in 2009).

### Pre and early history

The first attempts to establish a Swiss transport museum took place in 1897 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Swiss railways. The idea only bore fruit at the time of the National Exhibition in 1914, at which various original objects relating to railway history were displayed.



In 1918, Swiss Federal Railways (SBB) opened the Swiss Railway Museum in Zurich with the basic stock of the collection assembled at the time. The idea of a museum devoted entirely to transport was taken up again in the historic and personnel environment of the 1939 National Exhibition and in 1942 found expression in the formation of the Swiss Museum of Transport Association - based at that time in Zurich - which still operates the museum to this day. Following the failure to find a suitable site there for the planned museum, the association was offered one by the city of Lucerne and construction of the Swiss Museum of Transport began in 1957

on the 40,000 m<sup>2</sup> lido site adjoining Lake Lucerne. At that time, the Swiss Museum of Transport Association was owned by the SBB, PTT, private railways and transport organisations together with major companies in the retail, industry and tourism sectors. Consequently, the thematic orientation of the Swiss Museum of Transport also reflects the communication interests of the founding partners. The construction was supported through the financial commitment of the Federal Government and the city and canton of Lucerne.

### Brilliant start – successful development

Following a two-year construction period, the Swiss Museum of Transport was able to open on 1 July 1959. It rapidly became the most popular museum in Switzerland, attracting more than 27 million visitors by 2009. The first construction phase included the exhibitions on rail and road transport, post and telecommunications as well as aviation, marine navigation and tourism.



With the rescue of the oldest-existing steamer "Rigi" dating from 1848 and its positioning in the inner courtyard of the original Swiss Museum of Transport, an impressive memorial to Switzerland's technological history was created. In 1969 was added the first and as yet only large planetarium in Switzerland as well as the restaurant and office building. Since 1972, the ensemble of exhibition halls has been complemented by the Aviation and Space Travel Hall. The period between 1979 and 1985 saw the construction of the Hans Erni Museum, the second Rail Transport Hall with the roofing-over of the former outdoor railway area as well

as the Navigation, Cableways and Tourism Hall with the "Swissorama" 360° panoramic cinema. Since 1995, the range of exhibition attractions in this hall has been expanded by the "Nautirama" multimedia adventure experience. A further extension was completed in 1996

with the integration of the IMAX Theatre. In spring 1997, to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Swiss rail travel, the redesigned "Rail Transport" exhibition and Gotthard Tunnel Show was opened to the public. In the Swiss railway anniversary year, the Swiss Museum of Transport enjoyed its most successful year up to that time with more than a million visitors to the Swiss Museum of Transport and IMAX Theatre. 1999 saw the opening of the new space travel exhibition "Cosmorama". In autumn 2000, a further attraction was opened to the public in the form of the HIFLYER captive balloon. In summer 2001, the Swiss Museum of Transport had its planetarium upgraded to make it the most modern in Europe. 2002 saw the opening of a further major attraction in the form of the SWISSARENA, the world's first walk-on aerial photograph of an entire country.

### **National museum for transport and mobility**

The Swiss Museum of Transport Association was originally founded with the goal of creating a forum and showcase for transport and communication for the benefit of the founding partners. In the meantime, the Swiss Museum of Transport has developed into a successful technical museum of major national and international importance – making it effectively the national museum for transport and mobility. Consequently the main emphasis of the collection lies in transport technology and mobility topics, the development of which are portrayed in the various exhibition areas allowing for the social and cultural history dimension. Some 2,000 historic objects are currently on show in the Swiss Museum of Transport, among them unique exhibits like the first Swiss train (Spanisch-Brötli-Bahn), the first successful Swiss aircraft (Dufaux biplane) and the first Migros mobile shop. The Swiss Museum of Transport collections comprise a further 4,000 items as well as more than 150,000 documents on transport history located in the museum's archive and storerooms, accessible for study and research purposes. The originally intended forum concept continues to exist alongside the museum activities, as the Swiss Museum of Transport is regularly host and home to a wide range of events on the topics of "the past, present and future of transport and mobility".

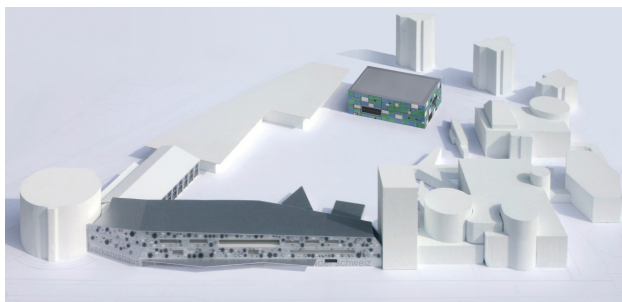


### **A 50-year success story!**

In 2009, the Swiss Museum of Transport celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. A Swiss success story goes on.

### **New perspectives to mark the anniversary year 2009!**

By then a new building and refurbishment programme with a long-lasting effect was realised.



Various buildings were built, converted and refurbished. In November 2008, the new entrance building FutureCom was opened as the first part of the new building projects. It contains exciting interactive communication worlds in the form of the Media Factory, two new restaurants, Mercato and Piccard, a museum shop and a state-of-the-art Conference Center. At the same time as the opening, word

premieres took place in the IMAX Theatre with 3D digital technology and the Planetarium with the "Stella Nova" programme. Following a complete redesign, the Internet site "verkehrshaus.ch" has also taken on a new attractive and clear appearance. In addition, an exciting publication "Das Verkehrsbuch der Schweiz" was launched to mark the anniversary.

At the end of June 2009, the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday of the museum, a new Road Transport Hall was inaugurated (2,000 m<sup>2</sup> exhibition area with interactive car theatre, display store, theme islands and display workshop). At the same time, the redesigned multifunctional open-air arena with a children's traffic garden and a road construction arena as well as the new documentation centre were opened.



In February 2010, the significantly expanded programme and the reorientation of the IMAX Theatre prompted a name change: from IMAX Theatre to "Filmtheatre at the Swiss Museum of Transport".

On 31 March 2010 the Swiss Museum of Transport opened the completely refurbished Aviation and

Space Travel Hall, complete with appealing new exhibits (e.g. a full-sized mock-up of the body cross-section of an Airbus A340, a helicopter simulator, and a real Agusta A109 K2 helicopter). The event also saw the opening of the special exhibition, "100 Years of Aviation in Switzerland", in commemoration of this centenary year in Swiss aviation history.

**For further information:**

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**Photos for publication:**

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