

Press information

GNTB microblogs on Weibo in China

German National Tourist Board active in social media

Frankfurt am Main, 7 February 2012 – "By getting more involved in social media, we expect to reach new target groups and to raise the volume of overnight stays – particularly among younger travellers", says Petra Hedorfer, Chief Executive Officer of the German National Tourist Board (GNTB). In 2011, the GNTB began to step up its social media activities in China, the world's biggest internet market with around 500 million people online. The primary communication tool is Sina Weibo, the Chinese equivalent of Twitter. By the beginning of 2012, the GNTB had more than 100,000 followers, making this one of the most attractive and actively used platforms for promoting Destination Germany. Regular posts about events, offers, culture and shopping strengthen interaction with consumers and send out a positive message about Germany as a travel destination. The aim of using social networks such as Weibo is also to drive more traffic to the GNTB website.

Analysis of the leading social media platforms

This initiative was preceded by extensive studies into social media platforms in China. The analysis revealed the Sina Weibo microblogging website to be the market leader in China with more than 200 million users. According to the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), its user base grew by 296 per cent from 2010 to 2011, a fourfold increase in one year. Since microblogging was introduced in China around three years ago, it has become a mass phenomenon and an important communication channel.

Worldwide social media activities

In January 2011, in an initial phase, the GNTB launched Facebook pages with a standardised international look for the markets in Austria/Switzerland, Spain, Hungary, the Netherlands, the UK and the USA.

This year, a Destination Germany Facebook page was also set up for France. Equivalent sites on the leading Web 2.0 platforms were also launched in China and other emerging markets. Countries were selected according to an analysis of the market-specific relevance of social media and with the aim of having as wide a geographical coverage as possible.

About the GNTB

The German National Tourist Board (GNTB) is based in Frankfurt am Main. It works on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology from which it receives its funding under a resolution passed by the German parliament. The GNTB develops and communicates strategies and products to enhance the positive image of German travel destinations abroad and to promote tourism to Germany. To fulfil its remit, the GNTB operates 30 foreign representative offices around the world. Further information is available from our online press centre at www.germany.travel/presse.