

eBikes & Ski Resorts: A Growing Trend in Mountain Tourism

Alexander Klink – Strategic Marketing Manager
Bosch eBike Systems, Lake Forest, CA

“*eMTB is the biggest chance we’ve had for alpine tourism in the past 40 years!*”
Darco Cazin, Allegra Tourism

Introduction

Current Situation

- More and more ski resorts allow eBikes on their trails



- Increasing importance and recognition on conferences



NSAA Downhill Bike Park Summit

- eBikes now are an integral part of both educational and demo programs



Ski Area Management Summer Ops Camp

- eBikes part of program for 1st time
- Integration of eBikes and trail access emerged as one of the major themes of the event

- Survey among ski resorts reveals big interest in topic. All resorts are planning to add eBikes to their experience. (n=10)
- Summer/Fall specific expenditures of ski industry in 2017-18 increased by 117% YoY

→ Where is the great interest coming from?

Ski Resort Survey – Results (n=10)



Most important reason for adding eBikes is to open the sport to a broader audience

Most relevant obstacle is trail access for eBikes which is in responsibility of land owner

- High level of awareness and interest in eBikes – yet limited knowledge
- Land managers willing to discuss trail access and give special permits

Motivation of Ski Resorts for adding eBikes

Status Quo

- Winter makes-up lion’s share of business for the resorts (e.g. Vail’s winter revenue is 70% of total)
- Summer guests spend less (e.g. Whistler’s average daily visitor spending is \$350 in winter and \$148 in summer)
- Ski lifts and mountainsides still largely under-utilized during non-winter months

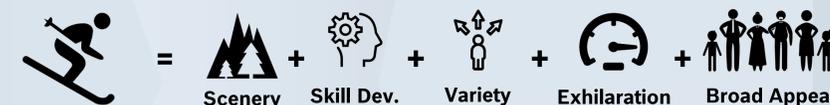
Target

Increase importance of summer months to:

- Increase revenue
- Have an insurance policy for low-snow or shortened winters
- Keep staff year-round

Winter Success Equation of Skiing

What are the key aspects that make skiing so successful?



- Biking is the leading on-mountain activity during summer/fall that provides all key aspects as skiing but a gap remains in terms of broad appeal (demanding climbs require advanced stamina)
- eBikes enable a broader audience to experience and enjoy the mountains on bikes - addressing the issue of broad appeal

Conclusion

In order to increase the importance of summer months, smart ski resorts investing in:

- More beginner/intermediate trails
- More trail variety (not just downhill)
- Formalized education programs
- Tours/experiences
- eBikes

Case Study: eMTBs and Tourism in Europe

European Bike Market

- In 2017, European eBike market volume was ~2.0 million and accounted for 10% of total bicycle market sales
- eBike & eMTB sales played a big role especially in alpine countries



eBike Tourism in Europe: Success Factors

- Legislation - Class 1 eBikes are treated as regular bikes
- Bike Hotels especially catering the needs of bike tourists
- Charging infrastructure (149 stations operated by Bosch)
- Safety & Education – specifically trained tour guides, rental locations, etc. to better instruct consumers

Successes of eBike Tourism in Europe

- Cycle tourism in Germany grew by 30% since 2014
- In Switzerland, the number of eMTBs rented doubled between 2016 and 2017
- 60% of rental bikes in French alpine area were electric (2018)
- eBikers are 3 times more likely to bring their family than bikers

Summary & Key Takeaways

- Ski resorts looking to establish year-round operations
- Biking has the best chance at ski like appeal – especially eBikes address a broader audience
- Ski resorts focusing on (e)Biking as this promises the most success corresponding to skiing
- Bike tourism in Europe proves the high potential – in order to foster that, US ski resorts must invest and establish success factors and trail access for eBikes
- Spread of eBikes leads to a Win-Win-Win situation for tourists, ski resorts and local communities