



**Switzerland.**

# What outdoor women want.

Guidelines with recommendations for action in order to meet women's needs in outdoor sport.

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# 1 Our motivation.

Our society is changing: more and more women have their own earnings, and their disposable income is continually rising. And they are becoming more and more active! Already there are more female than male hikers in Switzerland. Shouldn't we inspire these powerful women to try other mountain sports and outdoor offers?

To give Swiss tourism a competitive advantage, Switzerland Tourism held a *Design Thinking Workshop*<sup>1</sup> in February 2020.

Under the specialist guidance of gender expert Anna Weiss, around 50 representatives of the outdoor sector and the tourist regions considered what gets outdoor sportswomen moving and makes them happy guests and clients.

The key findings of the workshop are summarised in these guidelines, which include concrete recommendations for action. We hope you enjoy reading these, and that you have many lightbulb moments and hopefully countless ideas on how to apply them.

## Switzerland Tourism

**Maria Sägesser**, Head of Product Development and Innovation

**Sabina Brack**, Outdoor Expert in Summer Marketing



## 2 Why focus on women?

“Overall, women represent a growth market that is larger than China and India combined – more than twice as large, in fact. Given these figures, it would be imprudent to ignore or underestimate female customers. There is no reason why women should put up with products that do not fully meet their needs, or do so only cynically or superficially. Women will increasingly resist being stereotyped, segmented only by age or income, lumped together into an ‘all-women’ characterisation, or, worse, undifferentiated from men.”

*(Michael J. Silverstein and Kate Sayre, Harvard Business Review, 2009)<sup>2</sup>*

A growth market for women's offers is also discernible in tourism. More than three quarters of all travel decisions are made by women, with remarkably strong demand for adventure, culture and nature tours, in particular (*Forbes, 2014*)<sup>3</sup>. Interest in “solo female” travel has also seen above-average growth in recent years (*Overseas Adventure Travel, 2014*)<sup>4</sup>. Marketing professionals have so far seen the female segment, particularly in outdoor sport, as a niche market. Yet it harbours enormous potential, particularly with all those women who can still be won over to outdoor sport – through offers designed specifically for women. A relaxed atmosphere, interaction with other women within groups, and the opportunity to be guided by female role models have a hugely strengthening and motivating effect.



# 3 Key information in brief.

## Women as a target group

A single target group of women doesn't exist any more than a single target group of men does. Across all ages and skill levels, outdoor sportswomen can be divided into many individual target groups that differ in terms of ability, skills, motives and motivation. Nonetheless, there are parallels between many women's needs that are conditioned by biological and cultural factors.

## Stereotypes

Advertising and the media often show biased pictures of women in outdoor sport. Many scenes look staged and the sportswomen (often models) are young and slim, with long hair and perfectly styled. But women relate to "real women" who look like them, are similar in age or behaviour, or who could be their best friend. To widen the target group, we need to break away from the prevailing stereotypes by showing as many different women as possible in varied, realistic roles and situations in life.

## Sexism

Sexism covers a wide range of ways in which men and women are treated unequally. In outdoor sport, this ranges from blatant sexism (naked women advertising things that have nothing to do with naked women) to everyday sexism (women presented in a stereotypical way; significantly fewer women on the podium; no opportunity to compete; unequal prize money, etc.). To win women over, we recommend addressing this situation openly and dealing with sexism in its various forms.

## The power of role models

According to the motto "If she can see it, she can be it", we need to give a wide variety of female protagonists visibility and airtime in outdoor sport – from beginners to professionals and experts. Many women don't have any female role models in outdoor sport. This situation holds them back from starting, first and foremost, and then from daring to take the next steps.

## Confidence gap

The "confidence gap" refers to the phenomenon whereby men are overvalued and women tend to be underestimated. We need to take this into account in offer descriptions, images and conversations. Only then can we successfully attract the next generation of female participants in high-altitude tours and, building on this, secure more women in leadership positions at associations.

## Perfectionism

Women set high standards not just for themselves – but also for products and experiences. To inspire potential female clients, you need to take an in-depth look at their needs, possible barriers and their day-to-day lives, paying close attention to details throughout the entire customer journey.

## Small steps

From easy to challenging, known to unknown, random to targeted: designing experiences or courses based on basic teaching principles and methods enables girls and women of all skill levels to grow progressively through many small successes in their outdoor sport.



Hikers enjoy the sunrise at the summit of the Kaiseregg in the Fribourg region.

### **Why women only?**

Women-only groups often provide a more relaxed atmosphere and a unique opportunity to make new friendships with like-minded women or focus on female role models the first time round – an experience that can be hugely motivating. Many participants describe such encounters as a completely new, different experience of outdoor sport. Rather than being seen as exclusive, women-only offers should therefore be seen as complementary offers that particularly help guide beginners (but, with the right focus, not just beginners!)

### **Marketing versus community managers**

Companies and destinations would be well advised to not spend their budgets on media and influencers alone. The majority should be invested in joint activities with communities: these loose associations or clubs have

credibility and close connections and help create the next generation of outdoor sportswomen. To score highly, involve the community in product development too.

### **Inclusion – yes, please!**

One of the greatest barriers is the belief that content and offers from, for or with women will only appeal to women and will put men off. In reality, men are surrounded by women, whether these are their wives, daughters, mothers, sisters, friends or colleagues. Well-researched content with high production value also appeals to both sexes – provided it offers links to their own real lives.

# 4 Outdoor women as a target group.

## 4.1 A “small” target group with huge potential.

In relation to the target group of women in outdoor sport, people in marketing and media often say: “Small. Too small.”

How can this be when women make up half of the world’s population? Because outdoor sport is mainly practised as an individual sport, it is less institutionalised and organised than many team sports. We therefore lack meaningful data about this. The proportion of women varies significantly by sport: while roughly the same number or sometimes even more women climb on climbing walls, there are significantly fewer climbing out on high-altitude tours. And at higher levels, the pyramid becomes even more pointed.

**The greatest potential does not lie with just the active outdoor sportswomen themselves, but also with all those women who could or would love to be outdoor sportswomen.** That means: with women who until now have only ever gone to the gym, but who are fit enough for mountaineering. Or with women who are adept in climbing centres but have not yet trained on a real crag. Or with female hikers who might also love biking or mountaineering. And with women who have previously been categorised in other interest areas, such as those aged 45 and over or larger women. So as a first step, it makes sense to consider women as a target group.



## 4.2 Demographic data on women and their travel habits.

# 49.6 %

Proportion of women in the global population  
(*World in Data, 2019*)<sup>5</sup>

# 15 years

is the difference between perceived and biological age  
(*Zukunftsinstitut, 2016*)<sup>6</sup>

Women-only trips as

# a leading travel trend

for 2020

(*National Geographic, 2020*)<sup>7</sup>

# 80 %

of all travel decisions are made by women; regardless of who they are travelling with, who is paying and where they are travelling to; this represents the equivalent of USD 125 billion  
(*Forbes, 2014*)<sup>8</sup>

# 75 %

of clients who want to book adventure, culture or nature-themed travel are women aged between 20 and 70  
(*Forbes, 2014*)<sup>9</sup>

# 47, f

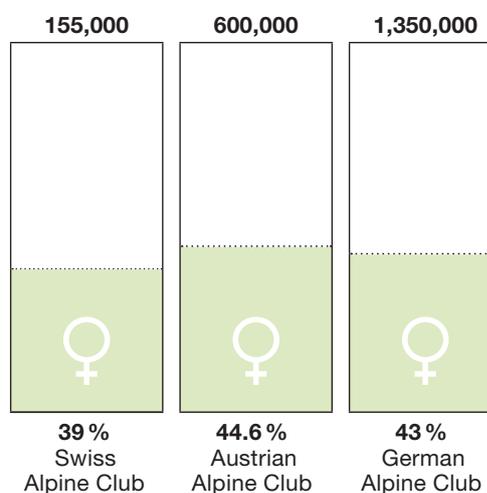
The average customer booking adventure travel is 47 years old and female  
(*World Tourism Organization, 2014*)<sup>8</sup>

### Women when travelling

- Use tourist services more
- Take public transportation more often
- Organise their trips further in advance
- Are more likely to travel alone than men (around four women to every man)
- Google search for “solo women travel”: increase of 32 % in 2017, 59 % in 2018 and 230 % in 2019
- Pinterest has recorded massive growth for interest in “solo women travel”. 350 % growth in pinning articles under “solo women travel”

(*Overseas Adventure Travel, 2014*)<sup>4</sup>

### Women as members of mountain sports organisations



(*Swiss Alpine Club, Austrian Alpine Club, German Alpine Club, 2020*)<sup>9</sup>

## 4.3 Women and men – similarities and differences.

Freedom. Happiness. Clarity. Flow. Focus. Excitement. As if I could do anything. Liveliness. Energetic. Inner peace. Motivation. Myself. Optimism. Contentment. Self-confidence. Buoyancy.

These are people's answers to questions about their feelings when exercising outdoors. Answers from men and women.

Whether men or women, they are all individuals that differ from one another in many respects: physically in terms of their constitution or hormonal balance, and also in the form of motives, motivation, ability and skills. In contrast to men, women are frequently categorised based on their biological gender. This is a missed opportunity, because women as a target group are not homogenous. A 56-year-old, very fit, ambitious woman with mountaineering experience may have more in common with a 28-year-old man than with a woman of a similar age.

### **Women over 45 as an exciting target group**

Many women can only focus more on their own personal development again once their children have grown up and move away. They are often rich in the resources of time and money, curious and motivated to learn something new. These women are savvy consumers, know what they want and often feel on average 15 years younger than they really are.

Climbers on the Stockhorn,  
Canton of Bern



## 4.4 Biological versus social gender.

“Sex is a biological characteristic. Gender is a social process.”



A mountaineer on the summit of the 4,000-metre Lauteraarhorn, Canton of Bern

### **Men as conquerors ...**

For most of history, it was not appropriate for women to cover large distances or stretch their minds too much. In the social hierarchy, men were entitled to roam. Thanks to their economic resources, they crossed oceans, traversed deserts and climbed summits.

### **... versus women as the weaker sex**

Although women have a demonstrably more robust constitution that is down to genetics and hormones and live longer than men on average, they were always considered the weaker sex. Their field was domestic, their task bringing up children. There may have always been female mountaineers, but they rarely or never documented their activity (or only under a false name).

### **And now?**

Much has changed compared with the past. Our ideas of what is typically masculine and typically feminine are in a state of flux. Geopolitical, societal and technological developments mean that our norms, values, institutions and rules are constantly changing. For example, our mothers and grandmothers were barred from joining Alpine clubs, in contrast to now, with women the most rapidly growing group in all Alpine clubs.



Women are often brought up to take as few risks as possible. This hampers them later when taking part in outdoor activities.

### **The past still sticks in the mind**

We still carry part of this history with us. This is seen when men have less confidence in women, or women have less confidence in themselves. While professional climbers are seen as bad mothers if they take great risks, high-risk activities are much more acceptable for fathers. Open or concealed sexism is at work here, which starts from an unequal social status between women and men, and reflects this in gendered stereotypes and corresponding behaviour.

### **Strong women who inspire others**

Italians Francesca Cavallo and Elena Favilli started crowdfunding in 2017 for a book that would show female role models. Within a very short amount of time, they amassed more than a million dollars – and the authors' vision became reality: "Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls" brings together 100 short portraits of prominent politicians, activists, artists, athletes and scientists from world history. The book is designed to embolden girls, to provide role models and inspiration.

## 4.5 Motives for outdoor sport.

# “To let go mentally.”

This is the most common answer to the question: **“Why do you do outdoor sport?”** (*Design Thinking Workshop ST, 2020*)<sup>1</sup>

Outdoor sport has massive positive effects on participants’ mental wellbeing. Yoga has gone from being a philosophical doctrine with spiritual and physical exercises to a mass movement. Outdoor sports could, with the right communication, forge a similar path to achieve greater popularity. This is something that only a few tourism specialists and marketing managers pick up on.

Outdoor sport has a positive impact on:

- mental wellbeing (99.7 %)
- physical wellbeing (99.7 %)
- physical strength / resilience (94.4 %)
- self-esteem (95 %)
- expectations of the future (95.3 %)

If women practise outdoor sport several times a week, life satisfaction and subjective happiness increase. In contrast, anxiety and worries are sidelined.

(*Women in Adventure, 2017*)<sup>10</sup>

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## 4.6 What stops women from practising outdoor sport?

# “Juggling everything.”

This is the most common answer to the question: **“What is the greatest challenge in women’s day-to-day lives?”** (*Design Thinking Workshop ST, 2020*)<sup>1</sup>

Beyond types of sport, age, life situation and skills levels, women mention **time, money and family responsibilities as the greatest hurdles**. Because outdoor sport is much more male than it could be, **many women have no female role models at all**. Six out of ten women also believe **that male interests in outdoor sport are taken more seriously** than theirs. Many also lack suitable

companions in their circle to practise outdoor sport with. Moreover, **it is especially difficult for larger and very small women to find female-specific gear** – a key point if you think how important (life)style is for many women. (*REI, 2019*)<sup>11</sup>

Many of these barriers are cultural and historically established. To capture new markets and design the future, **you therefore also have to tackle the past, status quo, societal developments and megatrends**.

## 5 Recommendations for action.

### 5.1 Avoiding stereotypes and showing real women.

Stereotypes of standard femininity and masculinity surround us in everyday life. We use them so often that we no longer question them. This strengthens social and cultural values that are linked to privilege and disadvantages.

Stereotypes also influence professional approaches, such as in family and social law, as well as training and job choices, such as that of mountain guide. The following recommendations for action show what successful marketing without stereotypes can mean.

#### **Showing women in all their diversity**

More women are in the mountains than ever before, in all their diversity: young, old, large, skinny, with short or long hair and a wide range of skill and experience levels. However, the women portrayed in the media and advertising are always young, slim, pretty and have long hair. Do we see women sweating, their faces contorted with pain, stretching, with scars, injuries, totally exhausted? Hardly ever.

The focus is generally not on action, but on elegance and aesthetics. While men can be seen sweating and doing things, women are still perfectly styled after hours of activity. It is therefore important to be aware of such stereotypes in images and moving images and to take an honest, fresh look at how women are portrayed in outdoor sport.

#### **Women are not girls**

Language as well as images shape our view of the world. Some critical scrutiny is needed here too. Grown women are often referred to as girls or ladies.

Author Hannah Röther gets to the heart of the matter:

“Ladies are elegant women who don’t get dirty. Girls are children who are not yet able to look after themselves and rely on others to look after them. In contrast, a woman on a mountain bike can be a multitude of things: an athlete, a fighter, a connoisseur, a dreamer, a racer, an adventurer – but definitely not an elegant lady or a child.”



Mountain biker  
in Val de Nendaz,  
Valais

Example: portrayal of women in outdoor sport.



Show real women,  
experiencing real adventures. Like here on the  
Breithorn ascent in Valais...



Young, slim, with long hair:  
this is how outdoor sports-  
women are traditionally  
depicted.

This picture does correspond to some women –  
but not the majority. These women are addressed  
much less often and don't see themselves in this  
role or can't identify with the offer.



... or on the Via Alpina  
long-distance  
hiking trail.



A mixed group of mountain  
bikers on the move,

with a woman at the front.  
Usually it is men that take this role.



## 5.2 Understanding – and overcoming – the confidence gap.

What do we mean when we talk about the “confidence gap”? A few examples below illustrate the problem.

- Brilliant sportswomen who consider themselves not good enough for sponsorship
- Experts in their specialist field, who never put themselves forward as such
- Women who are good at praising others’ performance – but would never do so for their own
- Women who are much more likely to suffer self-doubt than men (*Institute of Leadership and Management, 2011*)<sup>12</sup>
- Women who only ask for a pay rise one quarter as often as men – and then still demand 30 % less (*International Association of Conflict Management, 2018*)<sup>13</sup>
- Women who talk 75 % less in meetings than men if they are outnumbered (*Science Daily, 2012*)<sup>14</sup>
- Women who only apply for a job if they meet 100 % of the required conditions – while men apply even if they only meet 60 % (*The Atlantic, 2014*)<sup>15</sup>

All these phenomena are lumped together under the umbrella term “confidence gap”. Studies show that men are more likely to overvalue their abilities and performance, while women are more likely to underestimate them. Yet their performance does not differ in terms of quality.



The job description for a mountain guide places great emphasis on the physical aspects. The fact that personal and social skills are a necessary part of the role is not indicated. Women have the required competencies but often do not feel like they are as good physically, not “strong enough”, and therefore don’t train to be a mountain guide.

### Perfectionism versus failure

Perfectionism kills self-confidence. Studies confirm that this is something that predominantly affects women and that extends across a woman's whole life. Women frequently only feel secure if they are perfect. Or almost perfect. This aspiration is damaging.

Many women constantly question themselves in relation to their environment: "Am I...?", while men are more self-confident: "I am ..."

Perfectionism is an obstacle in practising outdoor sport. Because, by definition, anyone who wants to be perfect cannot afford to fail. But failure is an integral part of outdoor sport. New trails, new climbing routes, new movement patterns – these are all developed through trial and error.

### Small steps towards success

In practice, beginners in particular are often faced with tasks that completely overwhelm and therefore demotivate them.

It is small steps that produce one small triumph after another, as our brains learn through successful movement experiences.

This approach is even more important for women who don't have much self-confidence anyway. Women who are unsure of themselves are likely to blame failure on themselves ("I'm just not good enough"), instead of putting it down to difficult circumstances (e.g. a route that's too hard for beginners). Frustrated, they turn away from outdoor sport or continue half-heartedly. Many try a women-only camp that rekindles their love of outdoor sport, with a much gentler introduction. A more relaxed communal atmosphere and like-minded, similar role models also help.



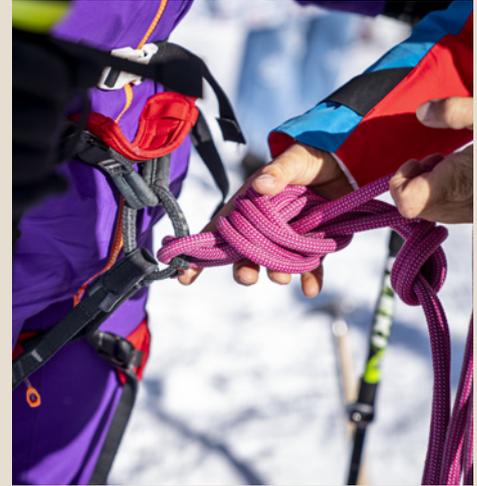


## Learning step by step.

Allowing for many small, motivating successes is applied far too rarely in the development of products, experiences or infrastructure. For example, bike parks are hardly ever created with the aim of allowing all user groups to consistently improve their skills. The leaps between individual tasks are too great, and users are either frustrated or settle for their existing level – although they were generally keen to learn something new.



It is small steps that produce one small triumph after another, as our brains learn through the experience of successful movements.



## From one woman to another.



“Technology” has a very masculine connotation. Many women learn from an early age that technology is a male thing, that their father, boyfriend, etc. worries about equipment. Types of sport that require a certain level of technical knowledge to use the equipment (climbing, mountain biking, ski touring) can put off female novices in particular.

## 5.3 Giving women a voice and creating role models.

Conferences and events on ground-breaking topics often don't have women on stage and involved in discussions. The same applies to decision-making bodies at many companies: it is mainly men who create marketing strategies, without questioning whether their point of view applies to women as well.

Women may write articles in magazines, but they are consulted as experts much less often than men. This is the same for both special interest topics and general media: in Europe, 85 % of all sports articles are written about men, and 90 % of these are written by men (*EU Commission, 2014*).<sup>16</sup> UNESCO assumes that 40 % of sports-people are female, but of these only 4 % are reported (*UNESCO, 2020*).<sup>17</sup> If women are depicted, it is often as statistics, not doers. They are more likely to be portrayed in passive and supportive roles than in active and leading ones. Their appearance, gender

or family status is much more likely to be reported than for male colleagues.

A lot of specialist knowledge is therefore lost, and this often results in a one-sided approach.



Climber, author, videographer and photographer  
Caroline Fink at Switzerland Tourism's Design  
Thinking Workshop

# 63 % of women don't have any female role models in outdoor sport. (*REI, 2017*)<sup>18</sup>

While men emulate their idols from a young age, women prefer role models that are similar to themselves or their best friend in terms of appearance, age and life circumstances. The ideal role model for outdoor sports-women of all levels are women whose success they admire and whose success also seems attainable.

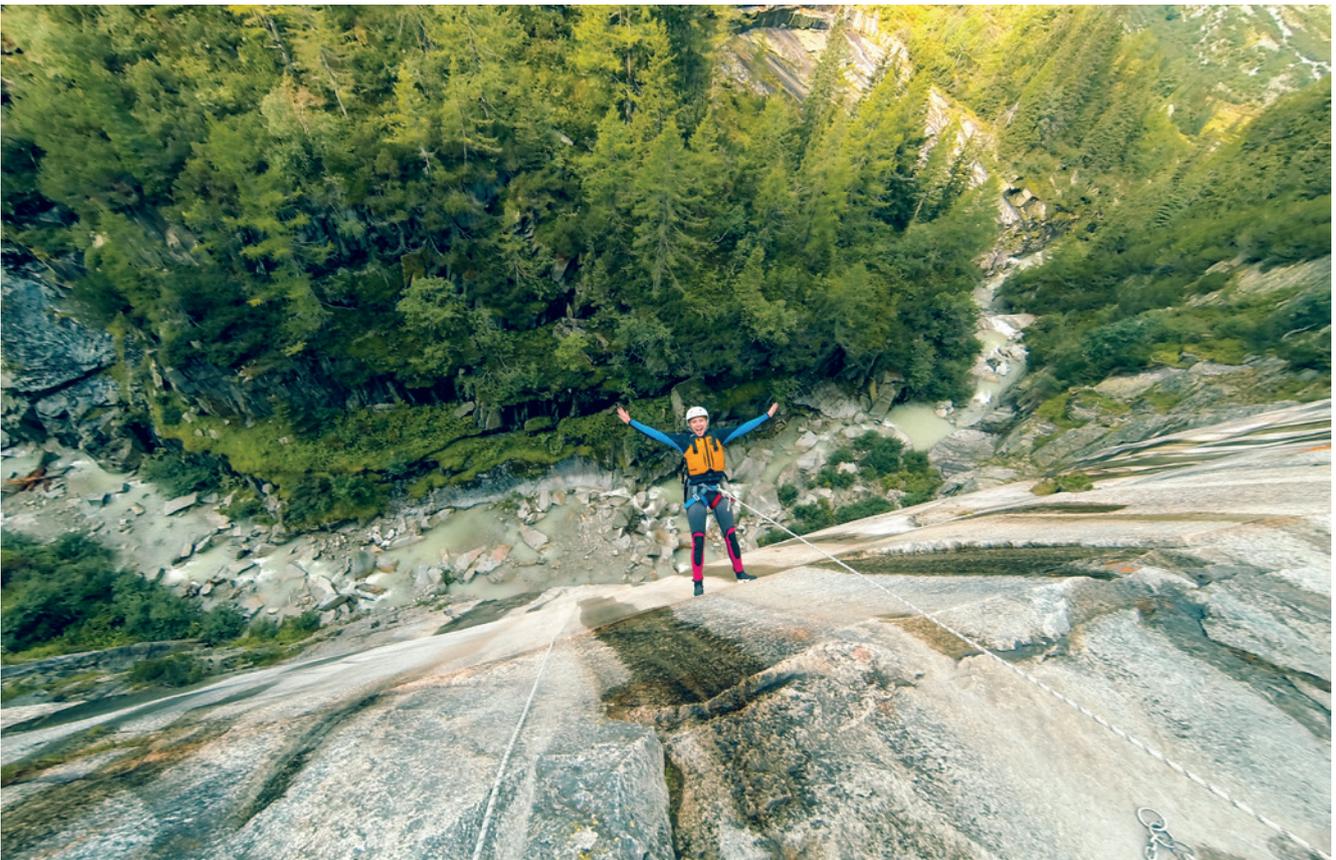
### **Role models with stories**

Elite athletes can also be role models for beginners – if we see the stories behind the pictures. Because we admire people who have worked hard for their success but are not perfect. They have weaknesses that we ourselves are familiar with and have experienced. They make mistakes. They grapple with the same issues we do. We can best relate to leading figures like these. Role models show what is possible. Step by step.

## 5.4 Reaching out to women through communities and clubs.

Women often read blogs and social media. Brand managers are therefore happy to work with influencers and role models: the costs are low and have a wide reach. We have no objection to this, but there is a lot to add: because brand managers confuse reach with influence. And they forget that we may be spending more and more time online – but we have lives offline too. **Outdoor brands and destinations invest far too little in partnerships with clubs or communities.** This is the most profitable investment overall, since strong brand loyalty, credibility and the

potential for joint product development yield return on investment. Communities represent the best breeding ground for outdoor sports-women of all levels, as shared growth is the motto. They may be regionally rooted or digitally networked, but locally active. Community role models are near, approachable and tangible. And they draw in the customers of tomorrow – specifically those who don't have anyone in their personal circle who encourages them to do outdoor sport.



A woman with the canyoning bug in the Grimsel region

## 5.5 Women only – positive momentum.

“Men are more focused on success at an individual level than women. Women mostly put the group dynamics and social side above performance. When women do sport with women, they are generally more prepared to take risks and more courageous than in mixed groups.” Minas Dimitriou, Professor of Sports Science at the University of Salzburg (*Bundessportmagazin, 2020*).<sup>19</sup>

Many women who often go out with their partner or other women also really appreciate the company of other women sometimes. It’s not just the sport that is brought into focus, but also social interaction: sharing similar challenges and experiences, making new friendships – across all ages and skill levels.

### Benefits of women only

Women-only offers make room for new learning experiences, with an atmosphere that is frequently much more relaxed. But they are still frequently associated with beginners. Stronger sportswomen therefore often do not feel in demand. A solution here might be to create a sort of circulatory system: professionals and advanced outdoor sportswomen act as guides, coaches and mentors for beginners. Once the latter have reached an advanced level, they can coach other beginners, and so on. Each woman becomes a role model for the next. This means that women-only offers are definitely in demand and should be considered complementary to “unisex offers”, rather than something exclusive. However, it is just as important to align “normal” offers to women’s needs and to convey these experiences as appropriate in text and pictures. A good example of this is the Women’s Trad Festival ([www.womenstradfestival.co.uk](http://www.womenstradfestival.co.uk)) in England, which explicitly does not exclude men.

In male-dominated or mixed groups, the competitive dynamic tends to (subtly) take centre stage. This changes as soon as even one woman is added to the group, often in a positive way in terms of social interaction and dynamics, as many men will be able to confirm. Many women withdraw in mixed groups; they don’t want to stop anyone, attract attention or “disrupt”. This means there is often little time to fine-tune their own technique and gradually improve.

A women-only rope team climbs a 4,000-metre peak.



### Values that mean a lot to women

Values such as harmony, credibility and authenticity are important for many women. To appeal to women, it makes sense to involve them in product development and communication.

### Attention to detail

Equally important is the fact that most women know how to appreciate and reward attention to detail. Recent studies have also shown that smaller events involving regional stakeholders have a much more positive effect on the region than large events.

# 6 Checklist.

## A self-check for you:

- Which points are you already complying with?
- Which points would you like to tackle quickly?
- In what areas do you have a backlog in demand?
- Who could support you in this where appropriate?

## Self-confidence

- Kick-off:** As a starting-point, let competent experts (e.g. equal opportunities officer, the Federation of Swiss Women's Associations, Alliance F, etc.) raise awareness for you and your colleagues
- Representation:** Support women in teams, as decision-makers, speakers, etc.
- Self-confidence:** Be aware of the "confidence gap" (job interviews, meetings, calls for tender, offer descriptions, etc.)
- Encouragement:** Encourage women to apply for exciting jobs too

## Participation

- Areas of responsibility:** Research the day-to-day needs of female customers and integrate these into your offerings: outdoor sport as a catalyst, e.g. for self-confidence
- Value innovation:** Research the true needs of the target group and create real value instead of falling for male/female stereotypes
- Communities:** They are your partners of choice when it comes to inspiring the outdoor sportswomen of tomorrow
- Inclusion:** Tell boys and men about your female role models and where appropriate include men who are interested in women's issues and perspectives in your offers

## Visibility

- Continuity:** No single shot (e.g. for International Women's Day): set out the precepts of priority and continuity
- Women as producers:** Award photo, film or textual commissions to women
- Distribution:** Produce high-quality images and moving images and make this material available to your partners and media through stock providers
- Quantity:** Show more women
- Quality:** Show more diverse women and a wide range of life plans, from young to old, fuller figures to slim ones, etc.
- Authenticity:** Women want "real women" (not models) who look like them, are similar in age or behaviour or could be their best friend
- Recognition:** Show real female athletes as role models
- Identification:** Create reference points that female (and male) customers can identify with, e.g. breaks in the biography, career topics, etc.
- Authenticity:** Emotional stories and real value instead of superficial copy & paste. Sense of being part of a group or community rather than individual models, real feelings
- Active women:** Don't show women as just passive and sheltered, but explicitly in action, management, as demonstrators
- Diversity:** Ensure that it's not just individual women or couples who are visible, but also mixed groups of women as well as groups of men and women
- Language:** Do not belittle
- Masculinity:** Also break free of the "typically masculine" stereotypes

### Growth

- Transformation:** Highlight opportunities, how and via which (small!) concrete steps women can grow in their sport
- Early start:** Create special offers for girls too
- Strategy:** Invest in communities, communities, communities. Beginners become advanced students, who become professionals, who in turn act as role models for advanced students, who in turn act as role models for beginners
- Accessibility:** Build a bridge between beginners and professional athletes, so that women at all levels can rediscover themselves

### Connectivity

- Linkage:** Link “internal” role models (e.g. in the company, at the destination) with “external” role models (e.g. female scientists, journalists, etc.)
- Approachability:** Create opportunities for female customers to meet their role models
- Networks:** Show exciting women from other divisions, professions and branches of industry, who are also sportswomen and can introduce their networks to the sport

### And finally

- Raising awareness:** Discuss the issue of female role models and stereotypes at the family dinner table and with groups of friends and colleagues
- For women:** Take centre stage, become the role model that you never had. Be a mentor, share your knowledge and support other women and girls
- For everyone:** Consider as a next step where you have the power to make a difference

# 7 Best practice.

**These companies can tell you a thing or two about how it makes business sense not to align corporate strategy to peers and focus on competitive threats but to courageously develop new markets. Finally, we want to put forward as motivation the following examples of best practice of how to implement these guidelines in day-to-day work.**

## **Nike, “Dream Crazier” campaign**

Be the hero you never had

- **2015:** Focus on women
- **2016:** Nine months in a row of double-digit growth in the women’s segment, which grew faster than the men’s segment
- **2020:** Expected revenue from the women’s collection of USD 11 billion

In its anniversary campaign for the “Just do it” claim, sports gear supplier Nike takes up the subject of barriers experienced by many sportswomen. “Dream Crazier” is designed to inspire girls and women to pursue their goals, even against social resistance. Lack of role models: “Be the hero you never had.” Stereotypes: “Be the first champion like you – and make sure that you’re not the last.” or “Age is just a number. Serena’s number is 1.” The sportswomen in question, including Serena Williams, call on consumers. “If they want to call you dramatic/delusional/confused/hysterical/irrational ... in short: crazy – fine. Show them what crazy can do.”

## **Learning**

- Addressing barriers and discussing them fearlessly
  - Creating links with elite athletes through shared experiences
- (Campaign Live, 2016)*<sup>20</sup>

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## **REI, “Force of Nature” campaign**

+ 9.3 % revenue growth in 2016

+ One million new REI co-op members

Based on results of the national study conducted by REI in 2017, “Women and the Outdoors”, the consumer cooperative undertook to show more women in its communications campaigns. It invested in employee training and provided a million US dollars for non-profits who worked in the field of “Women and the Outdoors”. The outdoor supplier also organised more than 1,000 events specifically for women. Additionally, managers allocated a much larger budget to developing high-quality gear for sportswomen – and also in more clothing sizes than before, e.g. to allow larger women to feel comfortable in stylish outdoor clothing.

## **Learning**

- A unified approach pays off
  - New women break into outdoor sport through support from communities
  - It pays to break free of stereotypes (dress sizes) in product development
- (Forbes, 2017)*<sup>21</sup>

## Bosch Ixo

### Superlative: the world's most popular power tool

The DIY market has always been highly competitive. However, for a long time all manufacturers focused on male DIY enthusiasts and aligned marketing, product design, campaigns and point-of-sale initiatives exclusively to this target group. Swabian manufacturer Bosch then decided to change strategy and set its sights on women as a target group. Instead of using the proven business concept “Shrink it and pink it”, the manufacturer conducted wide-ranging research and in-depth trend analysis (growing number of single households, economic crisis, cocooning).

Product development, product design and packaging were adapted to the wishes of female target groups. The offer saw brisk take-up. “With a 60 % share of the soft DIY group, women are good at improving their living environment and interested in implementing their creative ideas,” the market research found. “However, pragmatic women

doing DIY want to do the necessary repairs but also to build things that cannot be bought in shops.” There is a shared focus on the results and not the process itself. As a result, new generations of tools have been developed, but these have not been designed purely for women and should appeal to men just as much: handy, light, without technical frills and easy to use. The result: the Ixo screwdriver is the world's most successful power tool with 18 million sold worldwide. 50 % of buyers are women.

#### Learning

- Investment in detailed research pays off
- Seemingly, female needs also correspond to those of men's

(Bosch, 2019)<sup>22</sup>

## 8 About the author.

From B2B to B2C: Anna Weiss brings together the most diverse aspects of the outdoor and tourism sector. Aged 32, she travelled the world as an air hostess, co-founded a successful special interest company as an industry insider, and implemented brilliant projects as senior consultant at a creative agency. As a trainer in the German Alpine Club's national mountain bike team, she has natural leadership and agility. The tourism expert on gender issues fights for courage,

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