

In 2014, for the third time after 1990 and 2010, South Tyrol hosted the training camp of the German national team in preparation for the soccer World Cup. In 2010, the IER – Institute for Economic Research of the Chamber of Commerce of Bolzano analysed the economic effects of the training camp in Appiano based on its presence in the German media. This analysis focuses on the extent to which the 2014 training camp in the Passiria Valley was perceived by the German population and the extent to which this led to an increase in the image of South Tyrol as a holiday destination. Therefore, a representative survey of the German population – the most important guest group of South Tyrol – was conducted, as well as an analysis of the Internet and social media responses.

80.1 percent of the adult Germans were reached by reporting about the training camp in the Passiria Valley and were made aware of the holiday destination South Tyrol. Two thirds of the respondents rated South Tyrol as a (very) suitable venue for the training camp of the German team. The good presentation of South Tyrol during the training camp increased the interest in South Tyrol as a holiday destination, especially among those who have never been on holiday in South Tyrol before: The proportion of those who can imagine a holiday in South Tyrol in the next 12 months is significantly higher among those who heard about the training camp (30.2 percent) than among those who did not (22.5 percent). The German population especially remembered the nature, the landscape and the high-quality standards of the South Tyrolean tourism industry.

Over 45,000 reports on the training camp were recorded on the German web in the period from 15 April to 30 June. In the case of editorial online reports, media attention for the training camp is thus as high as for the opening or semi-final match of the German team. The training camp was discussed 6,500 times in social media (e.g. Twitter or blogs). Especially the younger generation is addressed by digital media: More than 40 percent of the German population under the age of 30 heard about the training camp in South Tyrol from reports on the Internet. Based on these results, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Through media-effective big (sport) events, almost the entire population of a country can be reached and consequently South Tyrol can be presented in an ideal way. This leads to an image gain for the brand South Tyrol and at the same time to a long-term assurance and increase of the turnover of the local tourism.
- Internet and social media are gaining in importance, especially for the younger generation. To promote this age group in a targeted manner, more emphasis should be placed on these new media.
- To consolidate and further enhance South Tyrol's image for the future, it must advertise continuously and market itself again and again. In Germany, the greatest development potential lies in the northern, western and eastern federal states.