

The magic of paragliding

Most people are fascinated by free flight, particularly paragliding, the most aesthetic of all forms of aviation. The possibility of being able to fly above the mountain tops with the greatest of ease, and of climbing up to the clouds, enthuses even those who have never been flying themselves. There is almost nothing else which inspires spectators to dream as much as the sight of a colourful paraglider, which rises off the ground after just a few steps by the pilot, and then soars against a background of beautiful mountain scenery. So a paraglider pilot consequently receives a lot of attention when flying. Passers-by look on with curiosity during launch preparations, then watch the paragliders rise into the sky, and follow carefully as they land.

Paragliding is still a very new sport, which has only had certification in Germany as a form of aviation since 1987. However, at the same time, paragliding is becoming more popular as a competition sport, when high-performance athletes achieve incredible feats. The media have discovered competition flying just recently. Their visually impressive reports have further increased interest in paragliding among the general public.

The paraglider as the ideal advertising surface

The paraglider can be used as a particularly effective advertising surface thanks to this fascination for paragliding, which escapes only a few people. Large **advertising messages and logos** can be added to the glider. There are many advantages to this. The costs are relatively low and it is easily done from a technical point of view. Writing on a paraglider is an unusual and eye-catching way to establish an advertising message or a brand name.

Unlike media advertising, viewers are always in a good mood when they see advertising on a paraglider: in good weather, in their spare time or when they are on holiday, often with friends and family. Paragliding is a recreational activity so the spectators too are almost always at leisure. They have the time and the inclination to watch the pilots. Studies have shown that passers-by watch a paraglider for between two and fifteen minutes. This long observation time means the advertising message has a lasting impression on the viewer. The memory of the beautiful view of the paraglider is associated with the message. This means that the retention time for the advertisement is longer.

Paragliders are flown in the recreational areas of the low mountain ranges and especially in the holiday regions of the alps and their foothills. Mountainsides are used for launch areas, usually close to cable car stations. Landing sites are in the valleys, often near tourist cafés or mountain railways. So the location for watching paragliding is almost always a compulsory holiday spot such as a nearby mountain railway or restaurant.

Holiday areas have very different characters and appeal to different **customer groups** because of the scenery and the standard of food and accommodation. Both in the low mountain ranges and in the alps and high alpine areas, there are sometimes considerable variations in price between the regions and the individual holiday areas. This makes it very easy to classify the regions and to determine the target groups for the chosen region

An advertising message on a paraglider can thus be directed to a customer group in a defined salary bracket by association with a region or place. It can be altered according to the season (summer/winter), thus **reducing losses** otherwise incurred by directing it to the wrong audience.

By way of example, the table below shows visitor numbers for the mountain railway at the Schmittenhöhe mountain in Zell am See (the chief resort in Pinzgau, Austria). The Schmittenhöhe is often used as a flying site because flying conditions there are good.

	Visitors	Per hour
Summer	216.690	190
Winter	8,816,849	9,840
Average number of visitors	9,033,539	4,435

What type of people are actively involved in paragliding or are seriously interested on the sport?

There were 25,963 active pilots in Germany in 2003, 87.6% of them being male. The average age was 36 years. 23% of the pilots were between 13 and 29 years of age, and almost half of them were between 30 and 39. 19.5% were over 40 and just 8.7% were over 50. This means that the typical paraglider pilot is **male, between 30 and 40, and with a good income**. The income level is assumed because equipment and training, as well as continuing to pursue the sport and maintaining equipment, are relatively expensive.

The relatively small number of active pilots does not reflect the fact that there is **great public interest** in paragliding. Surveys have shown that 15.7% of the population would like to try the sport. Young people in particular say that they are very interested: 31.1% of all those surveyed between the ages 16 and 29 would like to paraglide themselves.

Many people who do not wish to fly themselves (usually because of safety concerns or because they say they suffer from giddiness) are fascinated by the “courage” of pilots and the aesthetics of the sport.

Below are figures showing the sports regularly pursued by people who say that they are interested in flying. This shows clear trends.

- Mountain biking 72.8 %
- Inline Skating 60.2 %
- Snowboarding 55%
- Skiing 48 %
- Fitness 45.6 %

From this, we can conclude that the people who are particularly interested in flying are predominantly young, male and actively involved in sports, mainly in mountain sports.

An advertising message can accordingly be directed at a clearly defined audience and is particularly well suited for certain product areas, e.g. for sportswear and outdoor clothing, shoes, fitness studios, sports magazines, sports nutrition and isotonic beverages, etc.

Potential advertisers

Companies or individuals who want to use a paraglider as an advertising surface will have similar characteristics to those attributed to paragliding (see below) or connected to the sport.

- safety-conscious, not risk-takers
- aware of trends
- in tune with nature

- environmentally friendly
- sporty, but not aggressive
- fair
- non-pushy
- communicative

This suggests the following **product groups**:

Product group	Product description	Brands
Drinks	Energy drinks	Red Bull
	Light beer	
	German wheat beer (Light)	Erdinger
	Low alcohol drinks	
	Isotonic drinks	
	Caffeine drinks	Coca Cola
	Beer	Veltins, Becks, Erdinger, Löwenbräu, Henninger, Stiegl,
Food	Lemonade / Juices / Spritzers	Punica
	Convenience	Knorr, Maggi,
	Light dairy products	Müller
Cars	Energy bars	
	Sport combis	Volvo, Audi, VW, Ford, Opel, Chrysler, Toyota, Mitsubishi, Nissan, BMW, Rover, Mini
	Vans	VW, Ford, Opel, Chrysler, Toyota, Nissan
Clothing	Mobile homes	VW, Peugeot, Fiat, Hymer, Westfalia, Knaus Tiag Group, Carthago
	Outdoor clothing	Goretex, Schöffel, Jack Wolfskin, Mehler Outdoor, Big Pack, Marmot, Arc`Teryx, astri, VauDe, JeanTex, Columbia, Royal Robbins, Fjäll Raven, Ortovox,
	Fashion clothing	S.Oliver
Footwear	Sportswear	Adidas, Puma,
	Outdoor footwear, climbing boots	Hanwag, Meindl, Lowa, Scarpa, Kamik, Jack Wolfskin, Fjäll Raven, Teva,
Socks	Sports socks	Falke, Wigwam
Watches	Sport watches, aviation watches Watches with barometric altimeter	Breitling, Fortis; Glashütte, Tag Heuer
Communications companies	Hardware and network operators	Telekom, Ericson, Nokia, Siemens,
Service providers	Post and courier	DHL, Post, UPS, Overnight Courier, German Parcel
Airlines	Low-cost airlines	Germanwings, Ryanair
Insurance		all companies

Job agencies		Addecco, Manus, timecraft,
Fitness studio chains		InJoy,
Pharmaceutical producers / distributors	OTC products	Doc Morris
	Food supplements	

Facts and figures

Surface area

A paraglider has a large surface area which is an ideal place for advertising. A standard paraglider has a surface area of approx. 26 to 32 m² (depending on the pilot's weight). A tandem glider is 32 to 37 m².

Life of a paraglider

A paraglider which is used frequently can be expected to last for 3 – 4 years.

Technical implementation

The paraglider manufacturer Swing can add an advertising message or logo to a paraglider wing for you. Swing has already produced more than 250 gliders with advertising and can thus assist you in making your concept a reality.

The paraglider can be designed on computer by the sponsor or pilot. There is a considerable choice when it comes to the colour(s) and lettering which can be used. You can find more information on technical aspects on

http://www.swing.de/index.php?main=service&sub=sponsor_werbung&lang=en

Cost

The cost of having Swing put advertising on a paraglider depends on the complexity of the logo, the detail involved and the number of paraglider cells affected. Simple, less complex logos can cost the customer between € 400-800. Very complex advertising can cost up to € 1000 or even more. This price is in addition to the cost of a paraglider itself, which is approx. € 3,000, depending on the glider.

Delivery time

Production time is generally 3 to 4 weeks.