People development

Romain Mannelli explains how RTL Group invests in its employees

Germany
Townhall Meeting with Angela Merkel

Belgium
RTL Belgium broadcasting Champions League games

France
Rewarding journalistic excellence

Hungary
Hole in the wall off to a good start
Approximately 7,000 employees took part in training sessions across RTL Group in 2008. Many courses were aimed at helping employees to stay on top of new digital trends. At Groupe M6, for example, the digitisation of content in line with the new master control room set up in December marked a fundamental change in the work environment for more than 100 employees. Delphine Cazaux, Head of the Human Resources Department of Groupe M6, and her team set up a comprehensive training programme to accompany this important step to a tapeless broadcasting world – including introductions courses to explain what globally digitisation means, internal technical trainings for new archive and broadcast processes, seminars to present the new work flow to a brighter audience of employees and a train-the-trainer session to have a person able to train new employees.

“It is indeed important for our companies to invest – and I insist on the word ‘invest’ – in training employees,” says Romain Mannelli, Executive Vice President Corporate HR at RTL Group. “In my opinion, training is not a fringe benefit like a bonus, a retirement scheme or a complementary insurance. It is a shared duty – both on the employee’s part to guarantee his employability and on the company’s part in order to remain competitive.” Apart from technical courses, many companies offered trainings in online sales, online marketing and leadership competency development.

At FremantleMedia, a new Performance and Development Review (PDR) process was put in place last year, which required a significant amount of associated training. All managers and employees were involved in appraisal skills sessions which included an explanation of how to use the new tool. The PDR will allow FremantleMedia HR Departments to develop a much better understanding of the training needs throughout the company. An increase in FremantleMedia’s training costs has been pro-

“A clear commitment”

In 2008, RTL Group spent around EUR 4.5 million on continuing education for its employees, helping them to develop their existing skills or acquire new ones.

Luxembourg - 20 May 2009
visioned for 2009, in order to meet the training requirements identified by the employees and managers based on their Performance and Development Reviews.

Across all companies of RTL Group, employees are encouraged to identify their own training needs, linking them to current and future needs of the companies. Romain Mannelli encourages employees to take the initiative and to be the engine driving their own development: “The personal development of our employees is one of our most important investments, but our employees have to be the driving force. Our experience has taught us that unfortunately, training is not always taken seriously”, Mannelli says. “So it sometimes happens that scheduled courses never take place, either for lack of time, or because there are more urgent tasks at hand, or simply due to personal convenience. This is a mentality we are trying to change by differentiating between what’s urgent and what’s important.”

This opinion is shared by the French government, which made ongoing training available and mandatory for all employees in France on 5 May 2004. The French Continuous Training scheme known as the DIF (Droit Individuel à la Formation / Individual Right for Training) encourages employees to benefit from 21 hours of training per year which can be cumulated over a period of six years. This unique and extraordinary National Law is the French government’s attempt to encourage and place the responsibility on every professional to develop even more skills during their professional life.

Groupe M6’s Human Resources department encourages employees to take advantage of this law in their career plans. More and more Groupe M6 employees are benefiting from the DIF: 56 actions (1,387.50 hours of training) were conducted in 2006; two years later, the figure has doubled: 105 actions were conducted by the end of 2008 (3,015 hours).

Even without such a national law, some other RTL Group companies have implemented similar initiatives and encourage their employees to propose a personal development plan. They include Five in the United Kingdom as well as RTL Lëtzebuerg, BCE and the Corporate Centre in Luxembourg.

During this difficult time, the various HR Departments are very vigilant about costs as they try to do “more with less”. Many HR departments have become creative in planning their training and are looking for new training concepts. One example of creative concepts is the mentoring scheme introduced by the HR team at Talkback Thames. For the past few years, Talkback Thames has run a mentoring scheme for junior staff, which was initially open to office runners on 6-month contracts. They were linked with a more senior staff member who would assist them to gain a greater understanding of the business, build personal networks and ultimately provide them with support in securing their first step into a production role. The scheme was very successful and well
received, and as a result was opened up to all staff in production and non-production roles in 2008. Many senior staff have expressed an interest in becoming trained mentors, and many junior staff members are now establishing strong relationships, benefiting from the support, experience and wisdom of their senior colleagues.

Another example is the Belgian “table de conversation” which had been launched to allow employees to practice and learn a foreign language with the help of their colleagues. Alain Hoebeké, Regional Responsible in the “Partnership Department” at RTL Belgium, experienced this new concept. “There is nothing more frustrating than wishing to develop a new skill and not being able to do it because of a lack of time or money,” Hoebeké says. “My company gave me the opportunity to improve my Dutch by participating in a conversation group – it helps me to realise my ambition and to meet new colleagues – a great experience”. Another clever solution put in place at RTL Belgium is to propose in-house training, such as trainings in Excel or other PC applications with the help of experts inside the company.

In Germany, Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland demonstrates another way to offer more and better programmes for less money by increasing cooperation within the Group. Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland’s objective in terms of their training policy for 2009 is to increase synergies between the companies of the newly founded media group in order to improve the training catalogue. All employees of the German family of channels have access to a brand-new intranet where they can register for courses online. The training requests are efficiently centralised allowing for better coordination and quicker response. This idea is not completely new at RTL Group: the People section of Backstage also gives all RTL Group employees worldwide the opportunity to benefit from trainings organised by companies other than their own.

“In an economically difficult environment, training and people development are more than ever a priority for RTL Group. The global continuing education budget at RTL Group in 2009 was increased by more than 20 per cent over the investments made in 2008,” says Romain Mannelli. “We can only encourage our employees; it is up to them to take the initiative and to take their training seriously. We – the Human Resources Department and the supervisors – commit to supporting their initiative as best we can.”

![RTL Group total training investment](image)

*RTG Group total training investment Evolution 2006-2008 in K€*

Total training investment excluding “internal Group trainings” such as Bertelsmann University events and RTL Group Orientation Day.
Four months before the general elections, the Christian Democratic Union's top candidate fielded the questions of a studio audience for the first time. The 75-minute show broadcast from RTL Television's Berlin studio gave around 100 citizens an opportunity to discuss the political questions on their mind with the German chancellor. In addition, viewers could submit questions via Clipfish.de.

The show, co-produced by RTL Television and Spiegel TV, was moderated by Maria Gresz and RTL Television's Editor-in-Chief, Peter Kloeppel. Internet users could watch the Townhall Meeting as a live stream on RTL.de from 21:45, accompanied by a chat on the website. Now, the show may be viewed in full length and for free at RTLnow.de.

104.6 RTL and 105'5 Spreeradio listeners were also given the unique opportunity to ask Angela Merkel their own personal question in this discussion round, which included Alida Kubala, a 104.6 RTL listener, and Gerard Hendrik van Echten, a 105'5 Spreeradio listener. Both radio stations will broadcast the Townhall Meeting sometime this week.

The Townhall Meeting on 17 May marked the start of RTL Television's extensive election-year coverage. Just six days later, on 23 May, Peter Kloeppel will report from Berlin on the election of the Federal President. During the day he will keep viewers abreast of the election, and in the early evening will summarise the results and people's reactions to them in an RTL Aktuell election special.
Rise in advertising skills

The Institute for Media Research and Media Education at Cologne’s University of Applied Sciences has concluded that a teaching package by MediaSmart helps primary school pupils to deal more knowledgably with advertising.

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The free package of materials “Augen auf Werbung. Werbung erkennen und Kinderfragen” from the non-profit association, which has been promoting media and advertising literacy among primary school pupils since 2005, corresponds to the Year 3 and 4 curricula and has already reached nearly half of all German primary schools. Both teachers and parents recognise the positive aspects of the educational package as well as the increased advertising skills of the pupils surveyed and would recommend and use it again. Closer parent-child communication was also highlighted as a positive result.

Over 3,000 visitors per month are testimony to the great interest in the Media Smart website. The teachers’ and parents’ section has important information and up-to-date tips about the issue of ‘advertising skills and media literacy’. MediaSmart.de has now been redesigned to make it especially appealing for children, and its focus on Internet advertising has been expanded. An interactive forum enables interactive exchange.

Media Smart e.V. is a non-profit initiative to promote media skills and advertising literacy among children. It was founded in 2004 by advertising and media companies, including Super RTL. The aim of the initiative is to promote media and advertising skills at an early age in order to help create mature consumers. Claude Schmit, Managing Director of Super RTL, is Chairman of the non-profit association.
Directing the eyes

In order to make viewers feel at home in their favorite TV soap an appropriate set design is needed. Huub van Gestel is in charge of creating those sets for Grundy UFA and spoke about the appeal of his work.

Germany - 18 May 2009

How did you wind up creating sets for daily soaps?
At the end of the 1980s, Mike Murphy asked me to design the sets for Goede tijden – slechte tijden, the first daily soap in Europe. We had no experience in this segment whatsoever and I learned a lot. We had to try out many different things at first, which was very exciting but naturally also very exhausting. I joined Gute Zeiten – Schlechte Zeiten a few years ago; the complete set had to be redesigned after a fire in the Café Mokka. This was the beginning of the cooperation with Grundy UFA, and I have been working on various projects ever since.

What makes set design so attractive to you?
I love being in the studios, directing the eye in a certain direction. And everything is perfectly decorated. For example, when looking into the castle of Verbotene Liebe. Then I turn around in the other direction and the world looks entirely different. I like to create worlds that look real. If the viewers forget that it is all staged, then my work is a success. There’s a big difference between set designs for theater and television: in theater you are dealing with an entirely different expectation from the audience.

Where do you get your ideas?
Traveling is my big passion. I like to experience foreign cultures; I’ve spent a lot of time in Asia, the US, Brazil, Mexico, and Northern Africa... I create a kind of mental archive of various materials, imagery and interior designs and dive into other worlds. It is always interesting to enter other people’s homes – often you can’t imagine how a person lives just by meeting them. It is important for the design of the decorations that I know typical characteristics, for example of German living rooms, in order to represent them. We aim to create a realistic picture since we are close to the daily life of viewers in the daily dramas.

You recently spent time in Australia. Grundy UFA was adapting Gute Zeiten – Schlechte Zeiten at the time, and now “its parents” are learning from them?
Mike Murphy – and we’ve come full circle, back to your first question – asked me for some advice. The studios of the Australian series Neighbours were rented, and the contract was running out. They had to vacate the studio. The problem was that a good part of the series was set in a nearby neighbourhood, and it was very distinctive, with a small hill, tree lined streets, bungalows, etc. It would be very tricky to recreate that environment because it was so unique.
Journalistic excellence

Each year, RTL Radio France offers young deserving students in journalism an opportunity to practise their skills at the station by receiving a work contract.

France - 19 May 2009

Last week, Axel Duroux, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the French radio family and Arlette Chabot, Assistant General Director in charge of news at France 2 and President of the jury, awarded the 2009 Jean-Baptiste Dumas grants in the presence of the last journalist’s parents.

This year, candidates had to work on the following topic: “The evolution of French consumption during a crisis”. The first prize, a full-time one-year contract to work in RTL Radio France’s editorial department, went to Julien Sellier (22) a student at the Institut pratique de journalisme in Paris. Tied for second place, winning a full-time three-month contract to work in the same editorial department, were Raphaëlle Vantard (24) a student at the Centre de formation des journalistes in Paris and Marie Rouarch (23) a student at the Ecole supérieure de journalisme in Lille.

Created in 1995 by RTL Radio France, the Jean-Baptiste Dumas grant commemorates and perpetuates the memory of the late RTL reporter.
A fruitful nine-year partnership

RTL Belgium has obtained the rights for the Champions League. This week, the UEFA confirmed the Belgian audiovisual group as the free exclusive broadcaster of Champions League matches in Belgium.

Belgium - 20 May 2009

Starting next August, RTL-TVI, Club RTL and RTLinfo.be will have first choice, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, to offer 34 live matches (instead of the current 25) featuring Europe’s top teams and the world’s greatest football stars. The next season will be all the more appealing as the presence of Belgium’s future champion, Anderlecht or the Standard, is assured in the group phase starting in September.

Along with the well-known and much appreciated Champions league formula, the rights obtained by RTL Belgium include the UEFA Super Cup (featuring Champions League winners against UEFA Cup winners) and the playoffs (the last stage of qualification for the group phase of the Champions League).
A date with the planet

On 5 June, at 20:35, Club RTL will broadcast the film *Home*, directed by French photographer Yann Arthus-Bertrand and produced by Luc Besson. The creed of Home is: “It’s too late to be pessimistic.”

Belgium - 15 May 2009

Yann Arthus-Bertrand is a Photographer as well as a Writer, Journalist and Director. He also chairs the environmental association GoodPlanet, which works for sustainable development and in public education, particularly for young people. On 22 April he was named Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations Environment Programme. He talks about the adventure of shooting *Home* in these words: “It is a film that has a mission and I believe that the people who worked on this film have worked even more on this one than on another because they felt good, and that what we were doing was important, that the way it was going to be distributed, that what we were going to say was essential. I think it is a film unlike any other.”

The film *Home* is carbon offset, which means that all the CO2 emissions engendered by making the film are calculated and offset by sums of money that are used to provide clean energy to those who don’t have any. For the last 10 years, all the work of Yann Arthus-Bertrand has been carbon offset in this way.
Marketing cooperation

UFA Sports and the historic football club FC St. Pauli have signed a marketing cooperation in a strategic move for a promising future, one year before the club’s 100th anniversary.

Germany - 18 May 2009

As part of this agreement, UFA Sports will support the club, especially in marketing media, advertising and hospitality. In addition, UFA Sports will provide comprehensive consulting to FC St. Pauli in matters of stadium planning and financing. This cooperation gives the Hamburg second-league club – especially in this uncertain economic environment – a high degree of planning security.

“We are very happy to have won UFA Sports as our partner. I am convinced that both the marketing and the building of the new stadium will benefit from this partnership," says FC St. Pauli President Corny Littmann.

A shared marketing team will develop marketing deals and manage their sale according to the club’s specifications. All rights, and in particular the final decision authority for individual projects remain with the club.

“The result of the talks between FC St. Pauli and UFA Sports is a custom-tailored, forward-looking cooperation," says Robert Müller von Vultejus, one of UFA Sports’ Managing Directors. “It gives us great incentive to actively support FC St. Pauli in realising its goals.”

The partnership, signed for ten years, begins immediately in order to effectively manage the final selling phase of the upcoming season. Philip Cordes, Co-Managing Director of UFA Sports, adds: “We see FC St. Pauli not just as a football club, but as the expression of an attitude to life. We are delighted to be partnering with the coolest German football club long term.”
Hole in the wall in Hungary

At the beginning of May, RTL Klub launched the Hungarian edition of Hole in the Wall: Kalandra fal!, hosted by the cheeky, hilariously funny duo Balázs Sebestyén and János Vadon.

Hungary - 20 May 2009

The Hungarian version of the Japanese human Tetris game had an excellent debut on the channel: 40 per cent of viewers tuned in for the first show. Kalandra fal! is the Hungarian version of Hole in the Wall which has successfully launched in 15 countries including Denmark, Australia, Argentina and the US. In the show, which is broadcast daily on RTL Klub, two teams of three celebrities compete with each other. They have to jump through certain shapes cut into polystyrene walls. If they do not manage to, the wall pushes them into the water.

Critics of Hole in the Wall say the show’s chances could be weakened by the fact that it might not be able to bring anything new after the first few episodes. In addition it doesn’t have much to say, so it won’t be easy to keep viewers interested. Balázs Sebestyén, one of the hosts, disagrees: “The only aim of the show is to entertain people. It doesn’t really matter who wins or loses, we just want to make everyone laugh. We are going to poke fun of the stars again as we did in the jungle show – laughing both at and with them.”

The show has been on screen for two weeks now and is the most-watched show almost every evening. An average 40.1 per cent of viewers tune in to RTL Klub to watch the show, thus making Kalandra fal! the most popular programme in its timeslot.

“The secret to the show’s success is its sense of humour, which viewers first encountered in I’m a Celebrity – Get Me Out of Here. The two hosts gently poke fun at the celebrities, keeping things light and witty without descending into rudeness. The format itself is very funny but contains the risk of becoming boring after a certain period of time. This is why we have given every show a special theme, from karaoke to playmate edition,” Producer Peter Herman says.

Hole in the wall will run for another two weeks; RTL Klub will broadcast the final on 29 May.
Better protection

On 15 May, Ponle Freno, Grupo Antena 3’s road safety campaign, stepped up its efforts to improve the safety of pedestrians in traffic.

Spain - 18 May 2009

The new pedestrian-safety campaign kicked off on 15 May at 15:00 in the news programme Antena 3 Noticias, presented by Roberto Arce and Pilar Galán. This week, it will be given even more coverage in the programme. Earlier that day, at 14:00, the radio stations Onda Cero and Europa FM had made their first announcements about the new campaign.

The pedestrian-safety campaign includes preventive information for pedestrians and suggestions for improvement their safety on the road. It will be broadcast on Antena 3 as well as Onda Cero and Europa FM. In addition, all the channels will air commercials to build awareness for the dangers of road traffic among their viewers and listeners.

Pedestrians are among the most vulnerable traffic participants: 19 per cent of all traffic deaths occur in urban areas, and 40 per cent of them were on foot at the time of the accident. In a survey of the 30,000 members of the Plataforma Ciudadana Ponle Freno (Ponle Freno Citizens’ Platform), 90 per cent of respondents indicated that improving pedestrian safety is an important or very important issue.

More info on PonleFreno.com
10 years of Kinderwelten

On 9 June in Frankfurt, IP Deutschland and Super RTL will present the latest research and experts’ forecasts under the heading ‘Knowing what counts for children’.

Germany - 15 May 2009

New judges, new couples

Beau van Erven Dorens and Lieke van Lexmond joined nine new couples for another thrilling adventure in dancing: RTL 4 has been broadcasting Dancing With The Stars live on Friday evenings since 15 May.

Netherlands - 15 May 2009

What if the Berlin Wall was rebuilt?

Producer Nico Hofmann and writers Christopher and Friedemann Fromm asked themselves this question two years ago and developed a radical future scenario: Die Grenze. Filming begins in early June.

Germany - 18 May 2009

Tarantulas for breakfast

Last Friday evening, M6 was the most watched channel in terms of overall audiences, capturing the highest total audience so far for its great adventure game Pékin Express.

France - 19 May 2009
**rtl 7**

**Football fever**

Up to 2.6 million football fans watched RTL 7 on 17 May to see how SC Heerenveen got on in the Dutch Cup final against FC Twente Enschede.

Netherlands - 19 May 2009

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**RTL**

**Under the sun of the Croisette**

RTL Radio France is moving some of its broadcasting to the Cannes Film Festival once again this year. On location will be RTL journalists and cinema specialists Stéphane Boudsocq and Michel Cohen-Sohal.

France - 20 May 2009

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**A new direction for Bella Block**

Hannelore Hoger has taken up her role as Bella Block again this week as filming began in Hamburg for a new series of UFA Fernsehproduktion’s eponymous Saturday night crime show for ZDF. A broadcast date for the new film has not yet been fixed.

Germany - 20 May 2009
People

Tony Optican named Senior Vice President of Scripted Programming

United States - 18 May 2009

Tony Optican has been named Senior Vice President of Scripted Programming for FremantleMedia North America (FMNA), it was announced by Cecile Frot-Coutaz, CEO of FMNA. Optican will report to Eugene Young, Chief Creative Officer of FMNA.

In this newly created position, Optican will be in charge of all scripted programming for FMNA, helping to guide the company’s creative foray into the genre as it continues to expand its production slate. In addition to overseeing all creative development in this regard, Optican will also supervise the adaptation and sale of existing British scripted formats from the company’s vast programming library.

“We’re very excited to have Tony join our team,” said Frot-Coutaz in making the announcement. “His experience and expertise in developing creative, cutting-edge, original programming that entertains and inspires will play an integral role as we continue to move into this programming genre.”

Prior to joining FMNA, Optican served as Senior Vice President, original programming for Sci Fi Channel, where he developed and oversaw a number of original series, mini-series and limited event series programming including Eureka, Stargate Atlantis and Tin Man among others.

From 1999 to 2003, Optican was Vice President of current programming at Fox Broadcasting Company, where he oversaw creative story development and strategic planning for drama and comedy series including 24, Fastlane, The X-Files, Ally McBeal, Mad TV and Dark Angel.

Before joining FBC, Optican served as Executive Director of Creative Affairs at MGM Worldwide Television Group, where he worked in development and current programming for drama, comedy and reality series, and launched and/or supervised series including Stargate SG-1, The Outer Limits and The Magnificent Seven.