Working for a good cause
How RTL Group employees give back

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Philippe Delusinne, close to the audience

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RTL Now available on I-Pad and I-Phone

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Matt Cradle wins The X Factor

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Cover:
Sandra Thier, host of RTL II News, in Congo.
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Luxembourg - 16 December 2010

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In addition to her official role as Executive Director of Marketing & Communications at FremantleMedia North America, Ada La Greca is also Head of Community Services. As part of this, she leads a team of employee volunteers as they organize charity events throughout the year.

Once a year – usually in December – an email is sent out to employees asking them which charities they would like to support during the following year. Employees are then invited to ‘pitch’ their charities to the Community Services committee. Eight of these employee-suggested charities are chosen, and each charity is supported for a whole month during the following year. For the remaining four months of the year, there are set charity activities, including a Food Collection at Thanksgiving for a temporary relief centre to help the poor and homeless. “Working on these charity projects makes me so happy that I always have a smile on my face,” says Ada La Greca. “It’s great to see employees getting excited about all the charities we work with, as well as some of the activities we’re going to do in their own communities. It means a lot to them.”

Ada got the idea for starting up the programme from a previous company she had worked at which did a lot of charity work. “It’s wonderful to see how these charity projects are stretching employees to do things they may not have done before,” she says, adding: “Heading up the Community Services team has also stretched me as a person and it’s great that everyone at FremantleMedia North America has been so passionate about it.” Next year, Ada La Greca would like to help create a recycling scheme for FremantleMedia North America as part of the overall CSR programme.

“The idea of doing good and at the same time achieving an athletic goal”

PietHein Donderwinkel, Senior Promo Director, RTL Nederland

The Roparun takes place each year for the past 19 years, a non-profit relay race from Paris to Rotterdam. Hence the name Ro(tterdam) Pa(ris) Run. It’s not only a unique running event but it also has a commendable goal: raising money for people with cancer. The motto of the Roparun is: “Aiming to add quality of life to the days that remain, when no more days can be added to life”

In 2010, 275 teams took part in the 530 kilometre race – the longest non-stop relay race in the world. “This year was my first time,” says PietHein. The RTL Nederland team consisted of eight runners: Wilson Boldewijn, PietHein Donderwinkel, Ib Haarsma, Nancy de Haas, Suzanne Helsloot, Stefan Stroet, Suzanne de Waal and Michael van der Zweep. “It was such a great experience that nearly everyone on our team immediately agreed to join again next year,” says PietHein.

RTL 7 covered the run with a total of six programmes, showing the preparations as well as the relay race itself. “The idea of doing good in combination with sports appeals to me. It’s...
a great experience to run along with 275 other teams over three days.” For more information see RTL.nl/roparun.

“I have never covered up my disease in front of the public”
Antónia Erős, Host of Hiradó, RTL Klub

As the host of the news programme Hiradó on RTL Klub, Antónia Erős is one of Hungary’s most popular television personalities. She herself has diabetes and started her own foundation to help prevent this disease. In 2006 she was named a health ambassador. “I have had Type 1 diabetes for 15 years which means that I have to use insulin five to six times a day, measure my blood sugar level, ensure healthy nutrition and exercise frequently,” says Antónia. All of these measures are necessary so that she can live in a healthy way with diabetes, have fun with her children and work. “I have been hosting the news programme since 1998, and I try to talk about diabetes on every possible platform. The disease impacts the life of 1.5 million people, but half of them don’t even know about it. I have never covered up my disease in front of the public, as the feedback shows that my experience gives people strength.”

In 2005, Antónia Erős established the Egy csepp figyelem Alapítvány (One Drop Attention Foundation). She says: “I felt that running effective communication campaigns regarding diabetes is possible only in an organized way. I can honestly say that if I had not established the foundation, Hungary wouldn’t have what we call pharmacist treatment in Hungary.” The pharmacist treatment is one of the most important campaigns of the foundation, and is jointly organised with the Hungarian pharmacist organisations: since 2005, it gives everybody the opportunity to measure their blood sugar in one of 850 pharmacies and receive information about diabetes. “We started with 55 pharmacies, today almost half of the pharmacies offer this programme altogether with measuring blood pressure and cholesterol,” says Erős. The foundation also organises Egy csepp Világnap (One Drop Day) every year, partly to mark World Diabetes Day. Almost 9000 people attended the event in Budapest this year. Says Antónia: “I am very proud that partly due to my work, measuring blood sugar and paying attention to this dangerous, insidious disease that affects several hundred million people around the world, is becoming more and more natural to people.”

“I have never covered up my disease in front of the public”
Antónia Erős, Host of Hiradó, RTL Klub

In 2006, RTL Televizija founded the “RTL pomaže djeci” (RTL Helps Children) association with the aim of making a difference and embedding corporate social responsibility in the business strategy. Ivana Vujnović and Andrea Prelas are two team members in RTL Televizija’s social responsibility association, which operates as a charity fund and supports various children’s aid projects in Croatia throughout the year. Its main goal is to help sick, poor or mentally handicapped children and support the development of a safe, stimulating and creative environment for the children’s growth and education. Apart from dealing with the association’s most difficult cases during working hours, they continue after their working hours too.

“Every smile on a child’s face becomes a personal and professional success”
Ivana Vujnović, Project Coordinator and Andrea Prelas, Assistant, RTL Televizija
“To have a positive impact on society, it was important to choose one part of it and be dedicated to activities in it,” Ivana Vujnović says. “It somehow made sense that bringing change to the world should start among the youngest members of society.” Andrea Prelas adds: “We think that a lot of good has been achieved: 100 projects were realised in various areas of children’s lives, such as health, education, sport, rehabilitation and leisure time, with more than 100,000 children benefiting directly.”

Also, the association supports organisations that lack the resources and need help on specific projects. “We are trying to help the associations for impaired children in Zagreb as much as possible,” says Ivana Vujnović. “This means spending time with them, organising workshops and games. Every smile on a child’s face becomes a personal and professional success. It is a great pleasure to look back on the achievements and positive changes. Every positive result provides motivation to make even more of an effort.” In early December, “RTL pomaže djeci” organised a charity flea market at the Avenue Mallu Shopping Centre in Zagreb. A quantity of designer quilts, fashion accessories and jewellery was offered at low prices by some familiar faces thanks to the support of Croatian celebrities. The result: smiles and most importantly more than 20,000 kn were raised. Andrea says: “If you wanted to update your wardrobe while also doing some good, this was the place to be.”

During the first week of December, Bernd Reichart and Antena 3 TV’s Marketing Manager Raquel del Castillo submitted 10,353 signatures to Rosa Aguilar, Minister for the Environment and the Rural and Marine Environment. The minister expressed “warm thanks” to the ‘Hazte Eco’ campaign and congratulated Neox “on the initiative and on supporting young people”, since most of the signatures were from young people. Reichart confirmed that the collection of 10,353 signatures is a “fantastic result which shows that there is a great deal of concern about the environment, an issue that is very important to the young Spaniards our channel targets”. With regard to the launch of ‘Hazte Eco’ on Neox – the first major CSR campaign carried out by a Spanish DTT channel – Reichart said that, given the growth in the channel’s audience, it was already “sufficiently mature and relevant to join forces with the social commitment demonstrated by Grupo Antena 3”.

“Neox is sufficiently mature and relevant for social commitment”
Bernd Reichart, Managing Director
Digital Channels, Grupo Antena 3

This year, the Spanish digital channel Neox launched its ‘Hazte Eco’ campaign, which can be translated either as “get heard” or “go eco”. It is a sweeping, long-running campaign and aims to put ecology at the forefront of the company’s corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities. “We select one special topic or event to be supported”, says Bernd Reichart. The aim of this year’s ‘Hazte Eco’ campaign was to rally support for the goal of reducing CO₂ and to let the government know about that support with a view to the UN Climate Change Conference in Mexico. Viewers were encouraged to sign an online petition in October and November.
Next year, ‘Hazte Eco’ will aim for a new topic. “A decision has not been taken, yet,” says Bernd Reichart. “We have some ideas already, but still we are open to any suggestions from our employees and viewers.”

“I was determined to do something”
Sandra Thier, RTL II News presenter, RTL II

Sandra Thier, 31, has been a Unicef patron since the beginning of the year, and she is also the presenter of Unicef TV – a programme that provides information about the latest projects and that may be viewed on the organisation’s homepage. “Unicef is a huge international children’s relief organisation,” says Sandra. “What I really like is that the take a long-term, sustainable view.”

Sandra is especially committed to providing support to former child soldiers. In early November, she travelled to the Congo to get a first-hand idea of the local situation. “It’s horrifying: children fighting to survive each day,” Sandra reports. “That’s one of the reasons that many boys and girls become child soldiers. The rebel groups take them in and start by giving them food and clothes; later it’s drugs and weapons.”

The goal of her project is to raise money to support a transit camp that helps former child soldiers to find their way back to a normal life. “The idea is to try to re-integrate the children into their families,” says Sandra. “Also, they are to learn a trade so that they can one day be self-sufficient.”

Many presenters of RTL’s channels already go to a lot of effort for the RTL-Spendenmarathon telethon. But rather than resting on Spendenmarathon laurels, some go even further. They get involved in a variety of projects – so many that we can’t even list them all here. So the presenters Birgit Schrowange, Frauke Ludowig, Ilka Eßmüller and Katja Burkard with their support for the new campaign of the independent children’s rights organisation Save the Children stand representative for the many projects supported by RTL’s presenters.

The motto of the campaign is: “Guardian angels save children’s lives.” The four presenters showed their creative side and designed individual shirts to benefit children. The special thing is that there are only 30 of each guardian angel shirt and they cannot be bought – instead, they are presented as thank-you gifts to guardian angels. The idea behind this is that guardian angels aren’t just on duty around Christmas, but in action all year round. They protect children from disease, violence and exploitation each day. Guardian angels make regular donations to provide sustained, effective help to children in the world’s poorest countries. To wear this commitment with pride, each new guardian angel donor who signs up between now and June 2011 can pick one of the exclusive celebrity-designed shirts.
The campaign supports children in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Save the Children is using the guardian angel donations with other funds raised to finance programmes for education, health and protection for children in these countries.

“People can change their circumstances with poetry and passion”

Francisco Javier Medina, actor Alles was zählt, (All That Counts), Grundy UFA

Francisco Javier Medina, who plays Maximilian von Altenburg on the daily soap Alles was zählt (All That Counts), is involved in numerous projects. Francisco declares: “As a director and an actress, my parents championed their country’s poorest through their art and political activism, and were imprisoned and tortured by Pinochet’s fascist junta. They taught me that people can change their circumstances with poetry and passion, and can and should encourage others in this way.”

One special project is the children’s orchestra in Valle del Elqui, Chile. Children who come from a desert-like region and poverty-stricken families, make music together in an orchestra that gives performances all over the country. “Some of the children’s instruments have been in the family for three or four generations and in most cases are the only thing they own to help them escape an utterly bleak reality,” reports Francisco. Led by a conductor, they rehearse musical scores. “The conductor gave up his own career to support and care for these children,” says Francisco. “Seeing these children is an incredibly moving experience. It changed my life.”

The 33-year-old actor also supports street children in the Chilean capital, most of whom are victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse. In Germany, Francisco Javier Medina is active in a teen outreach project in Dortmund’s troubled Nordstadt neighbourhood. “My childhood friend Darius Sobhan Sarbandi has been an outreach worker with these kids for years and has now brought me on board,” explains Francisco.

Next year, Francisco Javier Medina will be taking a sabbatical to devote himself completely to children’s causes. “My dream is that one day all the children of our world get the opportunity to make their childhood dreams come true – just like these doors were open to me. That is my dream and I’m willing to go the extra mile for it.”
What if?

It would spell disaster on a global scale and it isn’t all that far-fetched: what if global warming causes sea levels to rise by up to 70 metres? On 18 December at 21:50, Vox will air the exclusive BBC documentary ‘Earth Under Water’, which uses state-of-the-art computer animations to show how our planet would change...
A huge market share verging on 40 percent; politicians who prefer commercial TV channels to public ones when they have something important to announce; only a few strong competitors inside the country, but some beyond its borders; a national television market split, by a language barrier, into two halves that really constitute two separate worlds: the Wallonian and the Flemish. Television in northern Belgium is different from that in southern Belgium. What it means to operate very successfully as the undisputed number one in a numerically manageable market, how it happened that a family of channels was able to establish this sovereign position in just over two decades, and what precisely these channels are doing strategically in order to maintain their position in Belgium going forward, was the topic of an interview by Bertelsmann’s intranet BeNet with Philippe Delusinne as part of its “Talking Business” series. The 53-year-old has been at the helm of RTL Belgium as CEO for nine years, and since 2007 has operated from the brand-new RTL House in Brussels, which was custom-built for RTL’s purposes and which has ranked among the most modern television studios in the world since its opening.

Colleagues in other countries can only dream of market shares just under the 30-percent mark, which your flagship RTL TVI now enjoys in Belgium – how did RTL Belgium come to occupy this dominant position?

Our position is indeed quite dominant and as far as I know rather unique. If you add the market shares of Club RTL and also those of Plug RTL to that of our main channel RTL-TVI, we get an audience share of nearly 37 percent. Our nearest competitor, the public broadcasting group, which also has three channels, doesn’t even have 20 percent. Our dominance is even more apparent in the ad sales market, where we command more than 70 percent. There are some particularities to the French-language TV market in Belgium, including the strong influence exerted by broadcasters in neighboring France on the Walloon region of Belgium. So our competitors are not limited to the public broadcasters RTBF and the country’s second commercial broadcasting group AB, but also extend to the public and commercial French broadcasters, which attract a lot of Belgian viewers every day. We compete with these French channels for viewers, but not on the ad sales market. And the local public service channels can only generate a maximum of 30 percent of their budgets from advertising. These two factors favor us at the moment.

But the basic conditions alone are hardly sufficient to explain the success of RTL in Belgium – so where does that come from?

Our recipe for success can be summed up very simply: our closeness to the audience.

What do you mean by this?

We have established this closeness to the audience over more than 20 years, mainly through four factors, which we will continue to cultivate very carefully in future. First there is the clarity of the program structure. Every Belgian knows what magazine, series or other format they can expect on a given day and time on RTL. This makes us predictable, and Francophone viewers stay loyal to our proposed programming. The second factor is that all the major television events of a given year happen on RTL TVI – and viewers know this and look forward to them. We turn stars, comedians,
news and politics into TV events, whose popularity is born out again and again. But even more important are two other factors: one, our undisputed expertise in news, and two, our Télévie charity campaign, unique in scope, which moves Belgium over a period of months year after year.

As a commercial channel, RTL is the number one even in news?
As far as news expertise goes we are the benchmark in the country – both at 13:00 and 19:00. For example, this is demonstrated by the fact that every politician who has something to announce chooses RTL TVI and not the public service channels. On average, more than 800,000 people watch our main news program. In addition to that there are magazines, specials and election coverage. With only 4.2 million potential viewers in French-speaking Belgium, this is an enormous audience share. We achieve this with a staff of just over 100 in the news editorial and production teams. By comparison, our public service competitors have a staff of 450 in news alone, but they are way behind us. It is also worth recalling that RTL Belgium’s entire staff consists of fewer than 700 people, including the two radio stations BEL RTL and Radio Contact, as well as the production, advertising, new media and administrative departments.

And Télévie, which you mentioned as the fourth success factor, is a charity campaign... ... and not just any old one, but the largest and most comprehensive in Belgium. Beyond its really very useful purpose it gives us maximum credibility externally, while offering the staff a lot of potential for identifying with their work. The roots of Télévie go back almost to the beginnings of our channel more than 20 years ago. We use the campaign to raise money for cancer research in Belgium and guarantee that every euro donated is used for this. Our viewers trust us in this respect, and currently donations come to over eight million Euros a year. That is a huge sum for such a small country, but I’m happy to add that the same is true for the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, which has supported us with great solidarity for the past seven years. This basically doubles the budget available to national cancer research. People in Belgium know this and give us a lot of credit. I would now go so far as to say that Télévie no longer belongs to us but to all Belgians. Everyone right up to the Belgian and Luxembourghish royal families wants to join in and help out. The country gets very excited about this campaign – and we at the channel certainly do; every staff member is involved. We are busy on this campaign from December to May of every year. Télévie involves more than 700 events. I don’t think there’s anything like it in the rest of the world – and it brings us very close to our viewers.

Do these viewers have any special preferences? Or put differently, are there any traits that set Belgian television preferences apart?
There are huge differences between the north and the south of the country. Dutch-speaking Belgians have a tendency to live a certain cultural autarchy, while Walloons are more international. Meanwhile, the latter tend to have rather conservative tastes and – often in contrast to their Flemish compatriots – are not exactly in revolutionary mode. One good example for this is our long-running series Place Royale, which consists of 30 minutes of well-made, but really very traditional footage about Belgian and international royalty. A few good recordings pictures, music and simple text – that’s the format in a nutshell. It takes only a tiny team to produce it, – and 600,000 people watch it every Saturday evening. When I ask the producer somewhat incredulously about the reason for this steady enthusiasm, he simply replied. “We produce dreams.” But this format certainly couldn’t be exported. Not even to Flanders, where the Flemish commercial channel tried, with limited success, to launch such a format.

So is there anything that Belgian television or RTL does export?
We inspire each other with regard to our programming and the various formats we produce. This is especially the case with M6 in France. For several years now, RTL Belgium’s star presenters have had parallel careers in France, which in turn guarantees them increased fame and recognition among Belgian audiences. In particular this has been the case with several Miss Belgiums. Here, it is practically a tradition that if they come from the French-speaking part of Belgium, they get their big chance on RTL.

All this probably leads to very close ties to your sister channel M6.
It’s indisputable that the ties are getting stronger and stronger in many areas, right through to the establishment of a joint teleshopping platform. Apart from the fact – and this one of RTL Group’s strengths – that these ties inspire us in shaping a
vision for our industry and that we are enriched by the monthly meetings at which the top management exchanges its experiences, RTL Group is very decentralized and we function like a federation of quite independent companies. This promotes entrepreneurial spirit in each unit. Each market, each country has its own laws, its own culture. Nevertheless, there are of course overlaps between our channels, and we exchange ideas in a close and friendly way. The latest and most successful example is probably L’amour est dans le pré (Farmer Wants A Wife).

This means that, by the same token, there are no contact points for cooperation with your counterparts at RTL Nederland.

I know that my excellent and very competent colleagues there work more closely with the Flemish commercial broadcaster VTM than they do with us – and in view of what I tried to explain this is just unavoidable.

But you have a complete, well-functioning family of channels in common with RTL Nederland and its affiliated companies in other European countries. What role does this group play?
The family of channels is RTL Group’s clever strategic response to the growing fragmentation of the television market. Today, there are simply more televisions sets and several target groups in a single household. It is better for us to service these different audiences ourselves with different channels than for them to switch to a competitor. For this reason our main channel RTL-TVI, which is devoted to a full range of programs for the whole family, is supported by Club RTL and Plug RTL. While Club RTL is devoted to children’s programs during the daytime and to sports and action evening aimed at men in the evening, Plug RTL is a channel for young viewers aged from 14 to 35.

Fragmentation now continues on the Web. What is RTL Belgium’s response to that?
It is basically the same strategic challenge with the same alternatives: Either you fight such a development or you shape it. We chose the second option. I am as confident as Gerhard Zeiler that television still has a great future ahead of it - because daily viewing time in Europe still increases year after year. In 2009, the figure had risen to 222 minutes from 203 minutes in 2000. But digitization has added new channels. We must redefine our business and support three mainstays instead of two: TV, radio and added to that, new media.

Where else do you see opportunities for growth?
I see an opportunity and also a necessity for RTL to grow in Belgium by diversifying. Because we need to free ourselves a little from a heavy reliance on advertising and the unpredictability of the ad sales market. So we publish books about our formats, we have our own collection of music CDs and movie DVDs, with “Allo RTL” we have our own cell phone service similar to M6 Mobile in France, and we hold events. Our festivals and parades bring more than 100,000 people onto the streets – it’s like Mardi Gras. The idea here is to try out many things, discarding some and further developing the best approaches.

And in what direction do you want RTL Belgium to develop as a whole?
The Belgian or rather the Walloon market is limited by nature. And today, out of a market of 4.2 million viewers we are managing to make an operating profit of more than EUR 40 million. That’s a great value proportionally. But the limitations of the market make cost controls and an accurate assessment of all investments essential for us. Probably because we had long since internalized this, RTL Belgium withstood the crisis year of 2009 very well. Meanwhile, the markets have recovered and our success with the audience remains undiminished. That means I am expecting a 2010 to bring very encouraging results, and to be one of our best years. With this momentum, we will conclude our next major project in 2011 – the conversion of our entire program to HDTV. We have the technical prerequisites. We have a fully digital studio, which is one of the most modern in the world, where we produce the lion's share of our programming ourselves.
RTL Television’s video-on-demand portal RTLNow.de was developed further and given a new layout specifically for the new app, which is optimised for the I-Pad and I-Phone. The RTLNow.de website, which offers nearly all of the channel’s programmes for later view, generated more than 17.5 million programme views in November 2010 alone.

Now I-Pad and I-Phone owners, too, use the RTL Now app to watch much of RTL Television’s programming on their devices for free within seven days of the TV broadcast – and daytime programmes can be accessed free for a full 30 days. Additional features enable quick and easy finding of the desired content: the app offers a programme calendar with a daily and monthly view, as well as an alphabetised index of the programmes and a search function. There is also a history feature showing previously accessed programmes and a rating function. The RTL Now app, which has been tailored to the use options of the I-Pad and I-Phone and has extra features, can now be downloaded from the Apple App Store for a one-time fee of EUR 3.99.

Robert Fahle, Head of Mobile at RTL Interactive, says: “There has never been a video offering like the new RTL Now app for I-Pad and I-Phone in Germany. The app offers real added value, as it can be used to access the popular formats any time, anywhere from now on – conveniently and in compelling quality. Our new app gives users an ideal complement to the RTL app, whose features include 24-hour live TV.”

To coincide with the release of the new app, a few days ago the RTLNow.de website underwent a refresh and unveiled a new look, the same one seen in the RTL Now app.

Presenting: the RTL Now app
The new RTL Now app lets users view complete RTL Television broadcasts on their I-Pad, I-Phone and I-Pod Touch devices.

Germany - 10 December 2010
And the winner is: Matt Cardle

On 12 December, The X Factor reached its climax with a thrilling finale. Up to 19.44 million viewers tuned in to ITV 1 to watch the Talkback Thames produced talent show in which 27-year-old Matt Cardle emerged as the winner.

Already on Saturday night, 15.4 million viewers had tuned in for the first final show. The show was the most popular Saturday night episode of The X Factor ever and was 1.7 million up compared to last year. Sunday night’s finale was watched by an average of 17.16 million viewers, representing an audience share of 55 per cent.

With his victory, Cardle, who was coached by Danii Minogue, won a recording contract worth GBP 1 million. His first single, a cover of Biffy Clyro’s Many Of Horror, is available for download since the end of the finale. Matt overcame a fierce challenge from runner-up Rebecca Ferguson – coached by Cheryl Cole. Simon Cowell’s boyband One Direction came in third place. After the final show, the run of results over the course of the series was revealed and showed that Matt had won 11 out of the 12 public votes. The only one he didn’t win was the first live episode.

Matt said: “I’ve had so many nice presents and letters and that makes me quite emotional. This victory is for all of them. I just can’t get over what has happened to me. I remember getting to Bootcamp and seeing 220 contestants and thinking, ‘I’m not going to get anywhere because I’m not like them’. I’ve got a beard and a cap, checked shirt, and no sense of fashion – sort of Brokeback Mountain meets a woodsman.”
Viewers to present *Editie NL’s 2000th*

Two viewers of *Editie NL* will be guest-presenting the 2000th edition of the popular news programme.

Netherlands - 16 December 2010

*Editie NL* is undoubtedly one of the most watched news programmes in the Netherlands. Since its launch in April 2003, over a million people switch on their TV sets around 18:15 Mondays to Fridays to get the latest national and international news. The programme’s motto is to be close to its viewers and bring the world closer to them.

On 16 December, the 2000th broadcast remains true to that motto as two viewers, Ryan LaLay and Evelien Onderlinden, get the chance to guest-present the anniversary show together with the current presenter duo, Jeroen Latijnhouwers and Margreet Beetsma.

Two weeks ago auditions for the guest-presenter roles were announced on the programme. From over 300 applications, four couples were selected based on a series of strict criteria, and then screen-tested. The screen tests helped the jury of three evaluate the couples’ presentation skills. LaLay and Onderlinden outperformed the other applicants with their energy, their enthusiasm and their outstanding improvisation skills.

The anniversary broadcast begins Thursday at 18:15 on RTL 4.
The Kress Awards, a new prize given by the Kressreport to honour the best strategies, products, innovations, service providers and minds in media, marketing and advertising, were presented for the first time on 30 November. One of the new industry trophies went to RTL Television: In the category ‘TV programming’, the channel won for most stringent overall programming on German television. Teamworx won the award in the ‘TV and film production’ category for the Scientology drama Bis nichts mehr bleibt (Till Nothing’s Left), and Grundy Light Entertainment won the WDR Mediagroup Award as TV Service Provider of the year.

At the Salon Buzzness Mobile, the RTL Football app released by RTL Radio in France won the ‘Mobile Award de Bronze 2010’. The football app is the only sports application to have won a Mobile Award. Before achieving this honour, the app had managed to rise to the top of the sport apps ranking in the French App Store within four days.

Wolfram Kons won the ‘Laureus Media Charity Prize 2010’ for his 15 years of commitment to ‘RTL – Wir helfen Kindern’ and its RTL-Spendenmarathon telethon. Unlike the Laureus Sport Award, which has honoured athletic achievements since the year 2000, the media award pays tribute to quality and social engagement in journalism.

In Australia, Master Chef Magazine, a food and lifestyle magazine launched in May 2010 based on FremantleMedia Australia’s Master Chef format, was named Launch of the Year at the Australian Magazine Awards. In its explanation, the judges emphasised that the magazine expands on the TV show’s content. By one month after its launch, the magazine already had a circulation of 150,000 issues – far beyond the original target of 86,000 issues.

The Norddeutscher Filmpreis was presented on 6 November 2010. Bella Block – Vorsehung, a film produced for ZDF by UFA Fernsehproduktion, prevailed over fellow nominees Bis nichts mehr bleibt and Neue Vahr Süd in the category ‘Best TV Movie’. Its director Max Färberböck also won the ‘Special Director’s Prize’. At the 44th Hof Film Festival, director Florian Cossen won the ‘Eastman Förderpreis’ for Das Lied in mir (The Song Inside Me).

Broadcasting Center Europe (BCE) is happy to report two awards just before the year ends. At the ‘Luxembourg Marketing & Communication Awards 2010’, BCE was pronounced the ‘Best Multimedia Agency’. The judges paid tribute to its versatility as a technology services provider for Luxembourg companies, its digitisation offers, expertise in matters of film production, and telecommunications services. For the film Is it true what they say about Luxembourg?, which BCE produced for Luxembourg’s government, and which humorously puts paid to numerous prejudices, the company received an ‘Award of Master’ at the ‘Corporate Media Awards’.

Awards in November

A number of RTL Group companies won awards again in November. RTL Television, Teamworx and Grundy Light Entertainment took away one of the first Kress Awards, while RTL Radio in France won kudos for its RTL Football app.

Luxembourg - 10 December 2010
‘Unter uns’ celebrates big anniversary

On 28 December 2010, RTL Television will broadcast the 4,000th episode of the popular soap set in Cologne’s Schillerallee. The series attracts an average daily audience share of 20.1 per cent among 14- to 49-year-old viewers (October 2010), making it a real audience magnet.
The Croatian TV market in November
In November, RTL Televizija was the most-watched Croatian TV channel with an average audience share of 26.7 per cent throughout the day among viewers aged 18 to 49. In prime time, RTL Televizija was Croatia’s leading channel for the third month in a row.
Croatia - 13 December 2010

Launching subtitles service
Starting 19 December, RTL Television will offer a subtitles service for the hearing-impaired. From that day on, numerous prime time movies will be offered with a subtitle option.
Germany - 14 December 2010

Can its history save Belgium?
Bel RTL dedicated its programme to the political history of Belgium on 14 December. The studio was been relocated to the Presidency of the Chamber. The purpose of this special event was to answer the aforementioned question which politicians and citizens ask themselves constantly.
Belgium - 14 December 2010

All together to put a smile on hospitalised children’ faces
Are you a renowned singer? D&CO needs you, but with a trowel in your hand! To make the end-of-the-year holiday season shine even more brightly, M6 has come up with a special schedule for its viewers, including an exceptional “C’est du bonheur !” show from D&CO on 29 December.
France - 15 December 2010

EUR 10,000 for Food Banks in Germany
As part of the ‘Kinder helfen Kindern’ campaign, Super RTL handed over EUR 10,000 to the National Association of Food Banks in Germany.
Germany - 15 December 2010
Everywhere and any time
The station with the “dance floor” sound explodes into new media – it’s the leading French media brand on Facebook.
France - 15 December 2010

RTL
‘State-of-the-art wit’
Dany Boon, Director of the renowned French movie *Bienvenue chez les Ch’tis*, is looking forward to repeating his success with *Rien à déclarer*. RTL Radio France is a partner in this upcoming movie.
France - 16 December 2010

RTL
‘I am a craftsman’
Professor Lantieri has left a lasting impression on people’s minds by performing the first full face transplant in the world; RTL Radio in France has awarded him the prize for the 2010 Personality of the Year.
France - 16 December 2010

Britain’s Got Talent renews its jury for next season
David Hasselhoff and Michael McIntyre have just been named judges on the Talkback Thames produced talent show. They will join Simon Cowell and Amanda Holden in the upcoming season.
United Kingdom - 16 December 2010
People

Michael Mittermeier comes to RTL Television

People

Laurent Boyer leaves M6

Now that he's a father himself, Michael Mittermeier is forced to acknowledge that having children is not for the faint of heart. Achtung Baby! shows you a kid's-eye view of the world: from TV playdates to schoolyard politics. RTL Television will also air a comedy documentary about Mittermeier's performances at the biggest international comedy festival – “Just for Laughs” in Toronto and Montreal – where he was the first German comedian to perform several shows in English. And of course Mittermeier will be featured in various comedy programmes on RTL Television.

Markus Küttner, Head of Comedy & Real Life at RTL Television, says: “We are delighted to have Michael Mittermeier in our programming from now on. He is one of Germany’s top comedians and his live stage act is among the strongest comedy programmes of recent years.”

Mittermeier complements the collection of top German comedians whose live stage acts RTL Television is broadcasting. With nearly 2 million videos and recordings sold to date, Mittermeier is one of Germany’s most popular comedians.

After more than 23 years, Laurent Boyer has decided to leave M6 in order to give a new orientation to his career.

Nicolas de Tavernost, Chairman of the Management Board of Groupe M6, says: “For 23 years, Laurent Boyer has contributed to the success of M6 with his talent. I would like to offer him my most sincere and warm thanks for all he has done and I hope he will pursue his career with as just as much talent and with wonderful people. He will always be considered a friend to Groupe M6.”
People

Nicholas Yatromanolakis

Greece - 15 December 2010

Alpha Media Group has appointed Nicholas Yatromanolakis as Director Corporate Communications with effect from 1 January 2011.

In his new role, Yatromanolakis will supervise the group’s strategic communications, media relations, press and PR, reporting directly to Alpha’s CEO, Christoph Mainusch. The 35-year-old previously served as Corporate Affairs & Business Development Director for the Greek agency V+O Communication. RTL Group was advised by V+O and also by Yatromanolakis when it successfully communicated the acquisition of Alpha. Prior to his time at V+O, Yatromanolakis held key communication roles at Microsoft, S&B Industrial Minerals and Harvard University. He holds a BA from Panteion University and a Masters in Public Policy from Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government.

Alpha also announced that Ersi Votsi, Press Office & Public Relations Manager, has stepped down from her post for personal reasons after three years.

Christoph Mainusch, CEO of Alpha Media Group, stated: “I am delighted that Nicholas Yatromanolakis will be joining the Alpha team, as he brings extensive knowledge in all fields of corporate communications to Alpha Media Group. I look forward to working with him towards strengthening Alpha’s good performance even further. I would like to thank Ersi Votsi for her outstanding contribution in Alpha’s development in the past years, during challenging times. She ensured that Alpha’s programmes and key talent news were successfully communicated to a wide audience. I wish her every success in her personal and professional life.”
People

In France, RTL Radio’s large family is in mourning

France - 10 December 2010

The passing on Wednesday night of 62-year-old Jean-Marie Lefebvre, the mainstay of the editorial team, and a man with an unmistakable voice and universally lauded character, has elicited a deep outpouring of emotion at the radio station and among the public.

Christopher Baldelli, CEO of RTL Group’s French radio activities, said: “With the death of Jean-Marie Lefebvre, RTL has lost a great professional who devoted all his talent and skill as a political analyst to serving a radio station that had become his professional family”.

Jacques Esnous, Director of Information at RTL Radio in France, added: “We are sad beyond words. We will dearly miss this tall man, his smiling face and boundless enthusiasm. Jean-Marie Lefebvre was not only a great journalist, but also a valued friend”.

Philippe Labro, a former CEO of RTL Radio, emphasised Lefebvre’s “exceptional warmth and humanity” and his “extraordinary ability to open up to people”. Journalist Olivier Mazeronne, a former manager of RTL Radio’s editorial team, remembers Jean-Marie Lefebvre as “one of the best informed journalists in the Paris who really valued precision and the total veracity of news”.

Jean-Michel Apathie, the star interviewer on RTL Radio’s morning show, featured the news on his blog, saying that it had prompted immense sadness. His colleagues from the political news team, the economic and social news team and the general news team, from presenters to assistants, have all expressed their grief in very touching words.

French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Michèle Alliot-Marie issued a press release in which she expressed her deep sense of loss of a “friend” who was both a great journalist and a great man. “On top of his tremendous professional qualities”, she pointed out, “Jean-Marie Lefebvre was an extraordinary person who exuded profound humanity as well as being an attentive, friendly listener”.

Born on 15 September 1948, Jean-Marie Lefebvre attended the Lycée Janson de Sailly, gained a diploma from the Paris Institute of Political Studies in 1971 and completed his degree in public law in 1973.

After working under the official in charge of road safety, in 1973 Jean-Marie Lefebvre began his journalistic career at Europe 1. Between 1987 and 1992 he was at La Cinq. As a foreign policy analyst he covered numerous East-West summits, European and Middle Eastern affairs and also official visits paid by successive French presidents and foreign ministers.

In 1992, Jean-Marie Lefebvre joined the editorial team of RTL Radio. From 1992 to 2002 he served as its editor-in-chief, as well as presenting the early evening news at 6 p.m. For 10 years, Jean-Marie Lefebvre and Jean-Pierre Defrain formed a duo who changed the history of the radio station RTL.

Lefebvre then turned his skills to editing foreign politics. After being appointed head of the foreign politics department in 2003, the subsequent year he was made editor-in-chief and presenter of the morning show 7/8 at weekends.

In 2007, he was appointed editorial advisor to the news management team. In July 2008, Jean-Marie Lefebvre was one of the few journalists present on the presidential plane that left to fetch Ingrid Betancourt in Bogota after her release. Both from the tarmac at the airport and from inside the aircraft he conveyed the full intensity of those historic moments to RTL Radio’s listeners.

Jean-Marie Lefebvre was a Knight of the French Order of Arts and Letters.
The weekly Backstage Newsletter will be on Christmas holidays. Starting on 4 January, you’ll find daily news from RTL Group and its profit centres on http://backstage.rtlgroup.com

Season’s Greetings
Meilleurs Vœux
Die besten Wünsche
Schië Feierdeeg

The next edition will be published on Thursday, 13 January 2010