A POLITICAL INSTITUTION
How RTL Radio became a reference in French politics
RTL II launches in Hungary
RTL Klub (Hungary)
p. 9

“Being objective is guaranteeing the quality”
RTL Radio (France)
p. 4 - 6

Merging with La Sexta
Grupo Antena 3
p. 10

Thanks for the memories, Dirk!
RTL Television
p. 11

New pair of presenters for Deutschland sucht den Superstar
RTL Television / Grundy Light Entertainment
p. 7

An ex-007 on RTL Radio!
RTL Radio
p. 8

Big Picture
p. 12

SHORT NEWS
p. 13

PEOPLE
p. 14
Every month, top politicians flock to RTL Radio’s studios in rue Bayard, Paris. With 6.1 million listeners a day, France’s leading radio station has become a real political institution for both its guests and its audience. Backstage met with Jacques Esnous and Alba Ventura to talk about the secrets behind this success.

“BEING OBJECTIVE IS GUARANTEEING THE QUALITY”
During the 2012 French presidential election, RTL Radio was the only station to air two hours long interviews with the final candidates, Nicolas Sarkozy and François Hollande, just before the weekends of the first and second rounds of the election. Gaining such exclusivity was no mean achievement for RTL Radio, which owes its popularity to its status as France’s top radio station, among other factors. Indeed, a recent survey\(^1\) established that French listeners consider radio to be the most reliable source of information, ranking higher than the printed press, television and the Internet. This makes it an ideal communication channel through which politicians can broadcast their opinions to an audience covering the entire political spectrum.

According to Jacques Esnous, RTL Radio’s Head of News: “Our independence is the key. This is a trademark feature of our station that has been acknowledged for many years now by both our guests and our audience. We put tremendous effort into remaining as objective as possible, which is our way of guaranteeing the quality of what we do.” In saying this, Esnous pays tribute to the professionalism of his teams, who pride themselves not only on knowing their subject matter, but also on leaving their own personal opinions to one side. This approach to exercising their profession has long been endemic at RTL Radio and is shared by everyone who joins the station. Another recent survey\(^2\) shows that RTL Radio is popular among an almost equal number of left-leaning and right-leaning listeners. “This leaves room for further progress to be made if we are to satisfy everyone who tunes in”, says Jacques Esnous with a smile.

Proximity also plays a crucially important role, and the station’s journalists have no hesitation in putting themselves in their listeners’ place, ensuring that any questions asked reflect the problems these people encounter in their daily lives and doing what they can to encourage diversity in their opinions. And then there are the station’s presenters. “On L’invité de RTL, Jean-Michel Aphatie sets the benchmark for political interviews,” explains Mr. Esnous. These interviews air on Mondays to Fridays, starting at 7:50. “His questions are direct and any guests who waffle are not let off the hook. Accordingly, many of our guests admit that encounters with Aphatie are no walk in the park, and some guests who turned up believing that appearing on the show would further their cause ended up leaving with bittersweet memories.” As Jacques Esnous emphasises, listeners know that when they tune in they will be given a clear vision of the most topical issues.

1-TNS-Sofres/La Croix annual barometer on confidence in the media – January 2012
2-IFOP annual barometer on the image of the media – July 2012
At the start of the season, to strengthen the station’s politics department, Jacques Esnous rang in a few changes, firstly by promoting Alba Ventura (presenter of *Les carnets d’Alba* on Mondays to Fridays, starting at 6:52) to head it up, and secondly by appointing Jérôme Chapuis to take charge of RTL’s unmissable Sunday debate, *Le Grand Jury RTL-LCI-Le Figaro*, which airs on Sundays between 18:30 and 19:30. Jacques Esnous explains: “Alba Ventura and Jérôme Chapuis are both talented journalists. Together with Christopher Baldelli, CEO of RTL Radio France, we sought to bring through more people from the young generation. In spite of their age, both already have a solid political background and are known and respected by French politicians.” At the same time, Jean-Michel Aphatie, who presented *Le Grand Jury* for seven years and had headed up the political department for two years, wanted to focus on his morning interview, which is one an absolute must for the station’s listeners. *L’Invité de RTL* attracts an audience of 1,807,000 listeners at all times, with 13.2 per cent audience share.

Alba Ventura is now one of a growing number of women at the top of the station’s editorial team, alongside Managing Editor Catherine Mangin. “This is something many people are unaware of: our editorial team is young and balanced in terms of gender equality,” Jacques Esnous says. According to the new head of the station’s politics department, one of the strengths of RTL Radio, its knack of attracting listeners and guests from the world of politics, is the station’s now long-established ability to link generations. In this connection, Alba Ventura – who felt she was cut out for a career as a sports journalist – called to mind an interview with former Prime Minister François Fillon, which she conducted along with Alain Duhammel, one of the leading political editorialists in France today who presents *Le fait politique* on Mondays to Fridays at 7:40. She says: “On the one hand I was amazed to be trusted with that interview, and on the other I was utterly surprised to be working with this colleague who, instead of behaving like a father figure, simply conducted himself like a seasoned journalist working alongside someone with somewhat less experience, but who was nonetheless fired up to learn as much from him as possible.”

Referring to the self-evident rules of propriety applying to any political debate conducted at RTL Radio, Alba Ventura stresses: “We are respectable and respectful journalists. Politicians have a message to convey and we give them an opportunity to express their views, while at the same time disallowing any form of aggression.” The aim of the game is to always take the lead from listeners to explain the latest government news, while simultaneously showing what is right. When asking Jacques Esnous about the highlights of a rather special political season, given the major election dates only scheduled for 2014, he concludes: “The economic crisis will force political leaders to take some important decisions. So I feel sure that those listeners who tune in to our station have plenty of high points to look forward to.”
Nazan Eckes (36) will co-present the new season of Deutschland sucht den Superstar (Idols) with Gute Zeiten, Schlechte Zeiten (Good Times, Bad Times) cast member Raúl Richter.

Germany – 28 September 2012

The new jury, consisting of Bill and Tom Kaulitz of Tokio Hotel, Mateo, the lead singer and founder of Culcha Candela, and top producer Dieter Bohlen, is currently recording auditions in Berlin (Backstage reported). RTL Television will broadcast the tenth season of Grundy Light Entertainment produced Deutschland sucht den Superstar (DSDS) at the beginning of next year. RTL Television’s Head of Entertainment Tom Sänger says: “We are very lucky to have won Nazan Eckes and Raúl Richter as presenters. Having the show presented by two moderators is another one of the surprises promised for the tenth season.”

Eckes says: “This is the anniversary season of the most successful Saturday night show on German television, so it has a special appeal, of course. I can’t wait to start. This is my first talent show – but as we often covered the show on Explosiv and Explosiv Weekend, I’m very familiar with DSDS.”

Raúl Richter comments: “I’m thrilled about the opportunity RTL Television has given me in presenting DSDS. The new job is a great challenge for me. Co-presenting it with Nazan Eckes is a very special and unusual assignment, of course. I’ve already met her through Let’s Dance and hold her in high regard. And no, I’m not leaving Gute Zeiten, Schlechte Zeiten, of course. I was given some free time that allows me to do them at the same time.”

Nazan Eckes was born in 1976 as a daughter of Turkish immigrants in Cologne. She gained her first TV experience for the music channel Viva TV in Cologne, where she completed an internship and then worked on the editorial team. Eckes has hosted Explosiv Weekend on Saturdays since 2005. She also worked on Punkt 12 and Exclusiv – Das Starmagazin. Raúl Richter has played the role of Dominik Gerner since the end of 2007. He spent the first four years of his life in Lima (Peru) and has worked as a TV actor since he was 12. Besides Gute Zeiten, Schlechte Zeiten, he has worked as a dubbing actor, and made his theatre debut in 2011.
His name is Moore, Roger Moore. On 3 October, on RTL Matin, Yves Calvi welcomed a very special guest: British actor and director Roger Moore, whose book Bond On Bond: Reflections on 50 years of James Bond Movies is about to be released.

France – 4 October 2012

Weekday mornings at 8:30, Yves Calvi offers an interview with a personality who is currently in the news. This Wednesday, it was Roger Moore’s turn. The most charismatic of the James Bonds, who is about to celebrate his 85th birthday, came to share his memories as well as anecdotes from the film set. His personal interpretation of Ian Fleming’s hero, his image as a sex symbol and the impact this role has had on the rest of his career were also topics he discussed with a sense of humour in the course of the interview. When asked which actor, in his opinion, played the most convincing James Bond, he replied: “Sean Connery was the first James Bond and it was he who truly created the character; no one could have done as well as him. Daniel Craig brings something new to it, and I’m impressed by his performance.”

The year 2012 marks the 50th anniversary of the world’s most famous secret agent on the big screen. The very first chapter in the adventures of James Bond, Dr. No, was released in 1962. It was not until 1973, however, that Roger Moore played James Bond for the first time, in Live and Let Die. He thus became the third actor hired to play 007 in the cinema. Roger Moore starred in seven James Bond films, the last one in 1985.
After acquiring seven cable channels in 2011, the RTL family of channels in Hungary welcomes a new member: RTL II went on air on 1 October.

Hungary – 1 October 2012

Dirk Gerkens, CEO of RTL Klub, says: “RTL II will be a channel for the whole family with a strong female appeal, which will counter balance the more masculine profile of Film Plus and the more general character of Cool.” The programme line-up is comprised of premium local productions and international series.

Gerkens: “There will be a strong presence of own-produced programmes, which will be broadcast after nine in the evening on weekdays.” The channel broadcasts the investigative report magazine *Forró nyomon* (Hot On The Trail) on Wednesdays, *Legyen Ön is Milliomos* (Who Wants To Be A Millionaire) will be broadcast twice a week on Mondays and Thursdays. At 23:00 on weekdays, RTL II offers a daily news summary. A dating reality show called *I love Gjoni* and *Szombat esti láz* (Dancing With The Stars) will air on Sunday evenings. RTL II also offers the best international series. It will launch with a number of Hungarian premieres, and will feature series such as *The Forgotten* with Christian Slater, Jerry Bruckheimer’s *Chase*, *White Collar*, and the Emmy award-winning *Modern Family* with Ed O’Neill.

The first step is to grow audience shares to the same level as that of the other channels in the portfolio. Says Gerkens: “Our first goal is to reach the audience share level of Cool and Film Plus, which are the most watched cable channels in Hungary, within a few years. Then, long term, we would like RTL II to be the viewers’ second choice after the market-leading RTL Klub.”
Grupo Antena 3 announced that the planned merger with La Sexta under the conditions specified by the Council of Ministers on 24 August 2012 is in line with the companies’ ideas.

Spain – 2 October 2012

The Grupo Antena 3 management board decided at the end of September that the conditions set by the Council of Ministers are appropriate to the content and the economic magnitude of the project that was adopted by the shareholders of the two companies at their Annual General Meetings in spring.

The necessary steps will now be taken to merge La Sexta and Antena 3. Following the La Sexta takeover, Grupo Antena 3 will consist of eight TV channels, in addition to its strong footprint in the radio, advertising and film sectors. The eight channels are: Antena 3, La Sexta, Neox, Nova, Nitro, Xplora, La Sexta 3 Todo Cine and Gol TV.

Once the transaction is final, RTL Group will own a 19.2-per cent stake in Grupo Antena 3.
Dirk Bach died in Berlin some time during the afternoon of 1 October 2012. According to press reports, the 51-year-old was found dead by fellow actors in a flat in Berlin-Lichterfelde. The cause of death is not yet known.

Germany – 2 October 2012

Germany is now mourning the loss of one of its most popular actors, presenters and comics. Television and the theatre were his life, and only recently he was treading the boards at rehearsals for Der kleine König Dezember in Berlin’s Schlosspark Theatre.

RTL Television CEO Anke Schäferkordt reacted to the news by saying: “Dirk Bach was a real one-off in our sector: as a presenter, as an actor and as a human being. In his roles he varied between being loud and in your face and quiet and subdued, often displaying unparalleled shades of emotion. He was versatile, complex and multifaceted, as well as being wonderful to work with, because he was so cool, calm and utterly sincere. All of us at RTL Television will miss him terribly”.

Markus Küttner, Head of Comedy & Real Life at RTL Television and responsible for shows including Ich bin ein Star – Holt mich hier raus! (I’m a Celebrity – Get Me Out of Here!), said: “Dirk Bach’s death means not only the loss of an outstanding artist, but the loss of a tremendous human being. We will never forget him. He truly ranks among the greats, and it was a real privilege to be able to work so intensively alongside him for so many years. I will be mourning the loss of a true friend”.

Besides countless appearances in TV productions, the actor was given the first show of his own, called the Dirk-Bach-Show, on RTL Television in 1992. Bach, the winner of two comedy awards (in 1999 and 2007), reached the peak of his popularity when he joined Sonja Zietlow in January 2004 to present the jungle show Ich bin ein Star – Holt mich hier raus! (I’m a Celebrity – Get Me Out of Here!).

At 21:15 on 5 October, RTL Television will broadcast a special programme celebrating the life of Dirk Bach. Frauke Ludowig will look back at the fascinating life of a special person and present the best and foumest highlights of his performances. Starting at 22:00, RTL Television’s sister channel Super RTL will change its schedule to air five episodes of the Dirk Bach Show, the comedy series showcasing the late artist from Cologne.
The German TV market in September

Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland

In September 2012, Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland’s channels collectively scored 34.5 per cent of Germany’s 14- to 49-year-old viewers – 7.8 percentage points ahead of the ProSiebenSat1 group. Vox and RTL II in particular report gratifying ratings.

Germany – 2 October 2012

Best season debut since 2006

M6 / W9

With a total audience share of 11.6 per cent in September 2012 (a 0.3 point increase over September 2011), M6 has had its best season debut since 2006. For the first time since its creation, W9 is the number three national channel with viewers under 35.

France – 3 October 2012

The Dutch TV market in September

RTL Nederland

RTL Nederland’s channels together attracted 33.1 per cent of the country’s 20- to 49-year-old audiences in September, which put them well ahead of the public-service broadcasters (27.0 per cent) and the SBS group (21.1 per cent).

The Netherlands – 4 October 2012

Still France’s number one radio station

RTL Radio / Fun Radio / RTL2 / RTL Net

Médiamétrie released its radio audience figures for the July-August 2012 period. Despite unfavourable geographical coverage in a period of summer migration, RTL Radio maintained its number one rank in two out of three audience criteria: listening duration and market share.

France – 2 October 2012

A good harvest for *L’Amour est dans le pré*

M6

On 1 October, the final episode of *L’Amour est dans le pré* (Season seven) that aired on M6 gathered 6.7 million viewers for a total audience share of 26.9 per cent – a new record for a wrap-up episode, all seasons included.

France – 4 October 2012
FremantleMedia promotes Donna Wiffen to Head of Worldwide Drama, with Claire Tavernier remaining Head of FremantleMedia’s central new media division FMX.

This is part of a strategic separation to distinguish and heighten focus on the key areas of drama and digital. Both executives will be based in London and report to FremantleMedia’s CEO, Cecile Frot-Coutaz.

Cecile Frot-Coutaz says: “Donna’s promotion and the creation of distinct leadership for Worldwide Drama will better enable us to support and develop our drama offering at what is a very exciting time for the genre. Donna is a drama specialist and has already played a significant role in furthering our scripted business around the world. Her expertise in drama and her knowledge of FremantleMedia make her the perfect person to build on our existing position and lead Worldwide Drama at FremantleMedia as we intensify our focus on the development and production of scripted content internationally. Claire Tavernier will now focus exclusively on the continued success of our central new media division FMX and on furthering our position in the digital arena.”

As Head of Worldwide Drama, Donna Wiffen will support drama strategy and production around FremantleMedia’s global network, including the development, acquisition and rollout of all scripted formats as well as leading and facilitating best practice. Wiffen has extensive experience in drama and production, most recently as Senior Vice President Production and Network, Worldwide Drama at FremantleMedia, a role she held since 2009. Prior to this she was the Head of Drama Production for FremantleMedia’s UK production arm. She has also held senior management positions with Cliffhanger and Endemol.
More about Backstage

BACKSTAGE IS AVAILABLE IN THREE LANGUAGES

You can read Backstage in your preferred language – in English, German or French.

DAILY NEWS FROM ACROSS THE GROUP – DIRECTLY IN YOUR INBOX

In addition to the weekly newsletter we offer to registered users a daily newsletter available in three languages.

‘AT RTL GROUP, WE CARE’

RTL Group is committed to effectively combine business success with socially responsible actions towards local communities and to protect the environment. Visit the Corporate Responsibility news section on Backstage (CR news) and find out how RTL Group aims to improve the societies in which we operate.

backstage.rtlgroup.com  backstage.rtlgroup.fr  backstage.rtlgroup.de

For more information, don’t hesitate to contact the editorial team:
Backstage@rtlgroup.com