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How RTL Group employees give their all for good causes

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The Netherlands
Leona Phillipo wins The Voice Of Holland week 51

/ 20 December 2012

Think before you print

Cover
Montage showing Astrid Körner decorating Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland’s Wunschbaum

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Once again this year, RTL Group has devoted considerable airtime to some major charitable causes, including the RTL Spendenmarathon in Germany, and Télévie and Les Restos du Cœur in Belgium and Luxembourg. Meanwhile, many of its employees, including some well-known faces, are also personally involved in championing projects close to their hearts. Here is Backstage’s round-up of some of those who have made a difference in 2012.
Germany

Astrid Körner of the Explosiv editorial team at Info Network and the Wunschbaum (Wishing Tree) team at Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland, once again organised the ‘Wishing Tree’ campaign this year. The idea is that children in need send their Christmas wishes to Astrid’s team, a fir tree is decorated with these wishlists and then employees can take a note and fulfil the wish – each costing around €15 to €20. “We made a conscious decision to support small and little-known local children’s projects in our neighbourhood, because we want to bring a sparkle to many children’s eyes ‘on our own doorstep’ and in the greater Cologne area,” explains Astrid. These projects were often suggested by various colleagues during the year, such as the children’s lunch in Cologne-Kalk this year. Other projects are close to Astrid’s heart or were proposed by organisations such as Diakonia, or by doctors.

Some of these children would not get Christmas presents without the campaign. In 2010, the team was able to meet 52 children’s wishes – this year the number has already risen to 176. Astrid is pleased with the positive response from our colleagues: “No matter how many children’s wishes we hang on the Wishing Tree: after two days the wish notes are always plucked from the tree and lovingly wrapped presents then arrive for us.”

“We can support five to ten regional projects each year, because all of the Mediengruppe companies now work at one site in Cologne,” she adds. “It’s a nice side effect that makes it easy for us to get lots of colleagues excited about the campaign.” Anyone who would like to donate money or make donations in kind can take a donation heart from the tree and donate any amount of money by direct debit for the benefit of the outpatient hospice service in Cologne. Last year about €2,000 was raised in this way; this year it will be at least €2,500. “I am very pleased to be joining the fantastic Wishing Tree team and the many wish fillers in giving the children real Christmas joy,” says Astrid. “My personal holiday season begins with the Wishing Tree campaign – it really gets me into the Christmas spirit.”

United Kingdom

Inspired by the volunteers at the London 2012 Olympic Games, 17 employees of FremantleMedia in the United Kingdom went to Newham City Farm in London to give it a much-needed facelift. Managed by the charity Community Links, the farm is open year-round to kids in the local community, an area which has high levels of child poverty and deprivation. Visitors can visit Blaze the Shire horse, taste the honey made in the local beehives, and buy some fresh farm eggs.

The FremantleMedia team enthusiastically rolled their sleeves up to create a bright wall mural, paint the fences and pot new plants to rejuvenate the gardens. Emma Hutley, Corporate Communications Officer at FremantleMedia, reports: “I had a fantastic day volunteering at Newham City Farm. It was great to meet colleagues that I’d never met face to face and really get to know them, whilst making a positive and lasting improvement to the community in East London. I cannot wait for the next volunteering opportunity.”

“WE WANT TO BRING A SPARKLE TO MANY CHILDREN’S EYES”
Astrid Körner, Explosiv editorial team, Info Network

“FACE-LIFTING NEWHAM CITY FARM”
Emma Hutley, Corporate Communications Officer, FremantleMedia UK
Australia
In 2012, fifteen members of the FremantleMedia Australia (FMA) team volunteered with Youth Off The Streets’ food van. One of them is Kylee Egliens, Accounts Payable Officer at FremantleMedia Australia. “I have volunteered four times so far and each time has been a fun and unique experience,” she says. The organisation provided assistance to homeless and disadvantaged youths since 1991. Its food van delivers meals to young homeless people in Sydney 365 nights a year and is operated solely by volunteers, who cook meals, serve food, clean the van and restock supplies.

Kylee Egliens says. “I’ve met some amazing people, especially those who come to the van. For some people this is their only meal for the day, so the biggest reward for me is knowing that by giving my time, I am helping in some small way to bring a much-needed service to the community, and helping those in need.” Many other employees of FremantleMedia Australia have also contributed to the cause by donating food to the food van.

France
M6 presenter Karine Le Marchand (L’Amour est dans le pré, On ne choisit pas ses voisins, C’est ma vie) donned a red ribbon in 2012 to become a spokeswoman for the anti-Aids association ‘Sidaction’.

“Respect the people who watch us – that is my motto. I’m passionate about giving an ethical slant to my professional work,” explains the young presenter, who was only too happy to use her high profile to benefit Aids research and prevention as well as support programmes for people with the virus and their families and friends.

“Sidaction” has personal significance for me,” admits Karine, who has lost a loved-one to Aids. “Like many Africans, he wasn’t able to benefit from the treatments that we have here.” The show Les Maternelles which she presented a few years ago on the public broadcaster France 5 also made her realise that “new cases of contamination in France were affecting women of my age who were playing the field without taking the necessary precautions. It’s sometimes easy to lose sight of the fact that love doesn’t only make you happy.”

“Giving access to education means offering freedom”
Faustine Bollaert, TV Presenter, M6

Another famous M6 face championing a good cause in 2012 is Faustine Bollaert (Accès Privé, Le Meilleur Pâtissier). She is an ambassador for ‘La Flamme Marie Claire’, an initiative launched by women’s magazine Marie Claire in which candles are sold through various associations to pay for poor girls to go to school in Cambodia and Afghanistan and to provide educational support in deprived neighbourhoods of France.

“I try to do my bit to shine a spotlight on the association’s work by talking about it whenever I can on the radio and television,” explains Faustine, who has supported the initiative for...
a number of years. “As a young woman myself, I inevitably feel concerned about the future of these girls. They could be our little sisters: by giving them access to education we offer them freedom. They are also the mothers of tomorrow whose futures will be shaped by the education they receive. I’ve been fortunate enough to receive one; it’s my duty to give them a helping hand.”

Belgium

Once a month since September, the Head of RTL New Media in Belgium, Jean-Jacques Deleeuw, has been taking part in ‘Operation Thermos’, which prepares between 100 and 150 meals a day and distributes them in the corridors of Brussels-Central Station. The meals are mainly intended for homeless people living in the centre of the Belgian capital. “At 17:00, a dozen of us meet in a school canteen where we prepare a complete meal,” he explains. “Then, at 20:30, we set up a big table in the station corridor and start handing out the food.”

For Jean-Jacques, preparing, distributing and fundraising for these meals is a whole project in itself, “a full package of assistance for those who need it most. The warmth of the human contact with people living on the streets makes for some powerful memories.” Launched at Christmas two decades ago, the scheme now operates every day and is made up of around 60 volunteer groups.

“THE WARMTH OF THE HUMAN CONTACT WITH PEOPLE LIVING ON THE STREETS MAKES FOR SOME POWERFUL MEMORIES”
Jean-Jacques Deleeuw, Head of RTL New Media, RTL Belgium

Last June, following a humanitarian trip to South Africa, Nicolas Roisin, Director of Magazine Shows and Thematic Programming at Bel RTL and Radio Contact, set up ‘Siyabonga’, an association that raises funds for Belgian and foreign NGOs working with underprivileged children. “Two years ago, I had the opportunity to live and work at an NGO in the Cape Town area helping children in the townships – poor neighbourhoods that are home to non-whites. I was prepared for the violence and the poverty but not for the lifeless looks in the children’s eyes. On the day I left, I told one of them that I would be back soon. This association is my way of keeping the promise I made to that boy.”

The association’s costs are met by the three founding members out of their own pockets, which means that every last cent can be put to direct use on the ground. “The project we are currently supporting is the construction of a reception centre for sick children in the Cape Town area,” Nicolas explains. That initiative has received official backing from the former president of South Africa and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Frederik de Klerk. “People are fundamentally good,” adds Nicolas. “I am supported by many other people, including lawyers, IT experts and translators, who have kindly agreed to work on the project. So far I have managed to persuade 14 colleagues, including some in Spain, Ireland, South Africa and Madagascar.”

“THIS STARK CONTRAST BETWEEN EATING AND NOT EATING HIGHLIGHTS THE INEQUALITY IN THE WORLD”
Matthijs Pet, Account Manager, Couverts

The Netherlands

Traditionally in the Netherlands the seven days leading up to Christmas are devoted to the ‘Serious Request’ charity campaign. During the week before Christmas, three radio DJs agree to be locked inside the ‘Glass House’ (Glazen Huis), the location of which changes from year to year – without being allowed to eat until enough money is raised. In 2012, the Glass House will be in the centre of Enschede. This year’s good cause is the battle to lower the global infant mortality rate.
Matthijs Pet, Account Manager at Couverts, says: “I have been a huge fan of the Glass House project for many years now, and last year an idea came to me: why not set up a Glass Restaurant right next to the Glass House, where people can come and have lunch or dinner and at the same time sponsor a very worthy cause by paying over the odds for their meal?”

So Matthijs, who has a vast network in the Dutch restaurant scene due to his job, teamed up with three partners to launch the Glass Restaurant, an initiative in which 25 catering entrepreneurs are participating, for no personal gain. What began as a crazy idea has resulted in Glazenrestaurant.nl, a real Glass Restaurant on the square in front of Enschede railway station. Whilst the DJs in the Glass House leave their food untouched until enough money has been raised for them to start eating it, guests will be able to go just around the corner to enjoy top-class food in the Glass Restaurant.

“This stark contrast between eating and not eating also highlights the inequality in the world,” says Matthijs. “Good food and care are things we take for granted, whereas the same cannot be said of many other parts of the world. Consequently, we decided to harness such luxury for a good cause. Anyone can pull up a chair and enjoy a top gourmet experience in our Glass Restaurant, safe in the knowledge that 100 per cent of the proceeds will go to this year’s worthy cause.”

Croatia
In today’s busy world, people often tend to forget how little things can be important and make a real difference. In addition to her official role as an actress with a leading role in RTL Televizija’s daily drama series Ruža vjetrova, Marina Fernandez is also a volunteer with ‘Angels’. Since 2005 the organisation, based in the Dalmatian city of Split, has provided relief for children with most severe forms of handicap. Due to their very difficult health condition the association is the only place where these children get the necessary support, rehabilitation and some form of education. ‘Angels’ is the only organisation in the greater region to have set up a kindergarten for children with special needs, fully equipped and adjusted to their needs.

‘RTL pomaze djeci’ (RTL Helps Children), a charity organisation founded by RTL Televizija with aim of assisting children’s organisations all over Croatia, has been cooperating closely with ‘Angels’ for several years now, funding various crucial projects for disabled children from Southern Croatia and changing their lives in the process.

Asked what they like most about their association, many of the children will say their friend Marina who spends time playing with them, singing for them and just being their friend. “I love children and I feel privileged to be their friend and to have the opportunity to spend some time with them,” says Marina. Though many people might feel the children are lucky to have a popular actress spend time with them, Marina sees it differently. She believes that at the end of the day, she gets much more from them and as she likes to say, they have enriched and changed her life in an amazing way.

Maria Fernandez provides support to disabled children
Hungary

Éva began working as an RTL Klub presenter in 2001. That same year she met the children of the local SOS Children’s Village and immediately became a volunteer. The organisation’s work focuses on abandoned, destitute and orphaned children requiring family-based child care. Hundreds of children in Hungary live apart from their biological families for a variety of reasons including parental separation, domestic violence and neglect, or have lost their parents to natural catastrophes and sickness.

In Hungary, SOS Children’s Village operates six facilities where approximately 300 children receive care from 24 professionals in each Children’s Village (foster parents, child care staff etc.) As an SOS Children’s Ambassador Éva is helping the children to live up to their potential while also striving to enrich their lives. She has accompanied the children on visits to theatres, concerts, Lake Balaton and the Adriatic Sea, and also helped them to try sailing. But her greatest achievement over the past ten years is that she has built public awareness of SOS Children’s Village and changed people’s way of thinking about the children living in care.

In 2006 Éva was given the ‘Order of the Smile’ title based on the children’s votes. Other notable recipients include Pope John Paul II, Mother Teresa and Steven Spielberg.

“I support SOS because they provide the orphaned children with loving families and try to give them back their lost childhood. The families give hope and trust to the children, so that they can feel loved and needed.”
In an interview with the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, RTL Group’s Anke Schäferkordt und Guillaume de Posch talked about the challenges of digitisation and their work as Co-CEOs.

Luxembourg – 17 December 2012

“We are keeping an eye on this development,” said Anke Schäferkordt with a view to the increasing popularity of Youtube channels online. “Television is a driver of digitisation and profits from it. New competitors like Youtube are entering the market. But everyone needs video – and RTL Group is a leading provider. Besides, there is a trend towards increasing professionalisation on the Internet.”

Guillaume de Posch confirmed: “It’s a trend we profit from. RTL Group includes the production firm FremantleMedia, which produces formats including *Idols* and *Got Talent*. FremantleMedia also produces for the Internet and runs a total of over 90 Youtube channels.” He also pointed out that each new online video service is a potential customer for FremantleMedia.

With regard to Google’s Internet TV ambitions, Schäferkordt commented: “If it turns out that Google is striving for a gatekeeper role in Internet TV with its Google TV service, in other words, if it were trying to influence people’s use of the content – that would run counter to our interests. As a broadcaster we want people to be able to find our content – we don’t want to be faded out or subjected to scaling.”
Significant investment: the logos of the five new channels launched this year

Other topics covered in the interview included the call for more flexibility for advertising in linear television and for fair rules vis-à-vis online services; developments in the TV advertising markets of Europe; and the question of opportunities for acquisition. De Posch emphasised Bertelsmann’s long-view interest in RTL Group: “We launched five new channels this year, and will invest a three-digit million Euro figure in them all told. And we have the full backing of our principal shareholder in this.”

Finally, the two managers who have jointly headed RTL Group since the end of April, spoke about their work as co-CEOs: “There’s no question that on paper such solutions seem anything but easy,” said de Posch. “But we’re both professionals; we’ve known each other for years. And our responsibilities are clearly defined: Anke runs the business in Germany; I am responsible for the international business and FremantleMedia. We’ve developed a very good working relationship in handling joint tasks such as strategy, human resources and communications.” Schäferkordt added: “We coordinate any overarching issues with each other and with our Chief Financial Officer, Elmar Heggen. This calls for discipline and common sense – and we have both. Plus, we trust each other. That is the most important thing.”
Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland is reallocating responsibilities for the programming of its channels RTL Television and Vox: Frank Hoffman becomes Managing Director of RTL Television, while Bernd Reichart, currently Managing Director Multichannel at Grupo Antena 3, succeeds Hoffmann as Managing Director of Vox.

Germany – 20 December 2012

Hoffmann (46), currently Managing Director of Vox, becomes the new Managing Director of RTL Television on 1 February 2013. Anke Schäferkordt (50), CEO of Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland: “Frank is a passionate content man with an excellent feeling for programmes. He has impressively demonstrated his professionalism and management skills in recent years at Vox. Frank will work with the excellent and very experienced team to systematically develop and successfully manage RTL Television’s programme line-up. I am very pleased that Frank is taking on this role.”

Hoffmann’s successor as Managing Director of Vox is Bernd Reichart (38). Reichart has served as Managing Director Multichannel at Grupo Antena 3 in Spain since 2007. In this role, he is responsible for several free-to-air and pay-TV channels in the Antena 3 family of channels. Schäferkordt: “I am delighted to have won Bernd Reichart for Vox. He brings the perfect blend of experience and programme management expertise in order to continue the success of Vox. At the same time he will contribute his experience from other media companies to the work of the Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland Management Board.”

Reichart and Hoffmann will both take a seat on the Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland Management Board and will report directly to Schäferkordt, who in the future will focus on the operational and strategic management of Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland as well as her roles as co-CEO of RTL Group and Executive Board member of Bertelsmann SE & Co. KGaA.
Frank Hoffmann has been Managing Director of Vox since 2005, prior to which he had already worked at RTL for 13 years, initially as an editor and reporter for Explosiv, before taking over as Senior Editor and Deputy Managing Editor of the magazine show in 1993. In 1994, he was appointed Managing Editor of the magazine show Extra, and from 1999 supervised RTL Television’s entire magazine division.

Prior to his current position as Managing Director Multichannel, Bernd Reichart served as Head of Investor Relations at Antena 3 from 2004 to 2007. Before moving to Spain, he worked in various capacities for the international sports marketing agency Sportfive in Hamburg.

Commenting on his new position, Frank Hoffmann said: “I am delighted to be working with the programme-makers of RTL Television, for whom I have had the highest regard ever since my time at RTL Television and thanks to our close collaboration within Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland. After several wonderful years at Vox, I am now excited to work on an even greater diversity of genres. RTL Television’s team has been setting standards here for many years. Our job now is to jointly continue this success!”

Bernd Reichart said: “Vox is a one-of-a-kind success story. I very much look forward to contributing my experience from the international market in order to continue the channel’s successful development together with its strong team.”
FremantleMedia Enterprises (FME) has closed deals for several titles across all genres – entertainment, scripted and non-scripted, and kids & family entertainment.

United Kingdom – 20 December 2012

America’s Got Talent, The X Factor USA and long-running franchises such as Project Runway continue to gain popularity worldwide. The America’s Got Talent juggernaut rolls on, with sales of the latest series, six and seven, to Portugal and Hong Kong. The X Factor USA has added new viewers in Italy, Malta, South Africa and Brunei in addition to Ireland, the UK, Hong Kong, Japan, India and a wider range of territories throughout Asia which have already snapped up series one to three. Project Runway, now in its tenth season, has been renewed by channels in Germany, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Hong Kong, New Zealand and the Philippines.

In the US the series premiere of FME’s comedic drama Wedding Band exceeded the TBS time period average for key targets, performing 39 per cent higher for young adults and 45 per cent higher for men aged 18 to 34. It has continued to build momentum throughout the year, selling to major global markets and more than 45 territories in Asia alone. The irreverent scripted comedy Web Therapy starring and executive produced by Lisa Kudrow is also enjoying global success and is now airing in more than 160 territories worldwide. Additionally, FME has signed pan-regional deals with Turner in Europe and Latin America.

Recently announced sales in FME’s Kids & Family Entertainment division include Tree Fu Tom, Monsuno and Max Steel, all moving into new markets the world over.
After weeks of competition and suspense, the Dutch have finally chosen their new *Voice Of Holland*. Leona Philippo prevailed over the three remaining contestants in the grand finale, which was watched by over 3 million viewers.

The Netherlands – 17 December 2012

Season three of *The Voice Of Holland* started on 24 August 2012. Week after week, as some contestants had to bid farewell to their dream, a lucky few stayed in the race for a chance at the show’s grand prize – the coveted best-voice-of-the-country title and the recording contract that goes with it. The four remaining finalists were Leona Philippo, Johannes Rypma, Floortje Smit and Ivar Oosterloo.

The finale involved the four candidates giving four performances each for a last opportunity to prove they have what it takes to be the next *Voice Of Holland*. Leona and Floortje each sang a duet with Swedish Eurovision Song Contest winner Loreen – a former contestant on *Swedish Idol* – while Johannes and Iver duetted with the popular band Racoon. The finalists also got to sing with their respective coaches. In the end, Leona’s performance was the public’s favourite and she became the winner of the show’s third season.

3.4 million viewers tuned in that evening. This corresponds to a total audience share of 47 per cent, making *The Voice Of Holland* the day’s most-watched programme. As was the case with the previous seasons, season three was Holland’s number-one programme and was watched by an average 3.3 million people each week. Singles by the show’s contestants dominated the Dutch charts during the period *The Voice Of Holland* was broadcast and will probably continue to do so in the weeks to come.
RTL Nederland’s apps have reached the Top 10 of Apple’s ranking of the most-downloaded applications in 2012.

The Netherlands – 20 December 2012

Apple’s release of the list of the year’s most-downloaded applications has over the years become some kind of a tradition, much awaited by most media companies. For 2012 in the Netherlands, RTL Nederland has scored quite well in the free apps category, by positioning three of its apps in the top 10. RTL XL’s app – the family of channel’s on-demand and catch-up service – scores best by reaching position number three. Weather forecast app Buienradar and the RTL Nieuws app are placed fourth and ninth respectively.

Arno Otto, Managing Director Digital Media at RTL Nederland comments: “We are delighted to see that three of our apps are among the most popular free apps of the year. Our digital strategy is to be on every platform. We want to offer people information on the subjects they are most interested in with a focus on TV, news, sport and the weather. This distinction confirms that we have succeeded in our mission.”

Finally, since 18 December 2012 the free RTL Nieuws app is also available on I-Phones. It provides users with the latest news, sport, as well as the RTL Boulevard and Buienradar app content, all in one single app.
In an interview with the magazine *Flydoscope* of the Luxemburgish airline Luxair, RTL Lëtzebuerg CEO Alain Berwick talked about the radio market in the Grand Duchy, its evolution over the past 20 years and the future of the medium in general.

Luxembourg – 18 December 2012

It was 20 years ago that restrictions were lifted in the radio market in Luxembourg. Since then, a market has developed alongside RTL Radio Lëtzebuerg in which another national radio station and four regional networks live side by side. For Alain Berwick, who was director of IP commercial services at the time, “this lifting of restrictions signified the exit from a monopoly situation and the entry into a more competitive situation, all the while knowing that Luxembourgers and foreign residents alike were listening to foreign radio stations. In a way, the competition already existed.”

Thus, the arrival of new operators did not destabilise the station in any way, either in terms of audience or results. “And that did not stop RTL’s drive to continue to improve its programming either,” says Alain Berwick. To adapt to this liberalisation, “we also made enormous qualitative efforts in both format and content, in order to guarantee a truly public service and to inform in a neutral and objective way. In addition to this, we developed the concept of the RTL Family, exploiting the synergies between our different media to the fullest.”

In a country of a little over 500,000 inhabitants, the media landscape in the Grand Duchy proves to be quite distinctive in more than one respect. Luxembourg generally has a surplus in terms of media. “Commercially, the country remains a small market, while at the same time, residents watch foreign television and buy foreign magazines. The competition is therefore enormous,” explains Alain Berwick.

In spite of this, the radio station continues to come out on top. In fact, “it is an accompanying medium. It is listened to in the car, which now accounts for most radio consumption. On a smartphone or tablet. One can also listen in streaming or as a podcast. Its place thus remains very strong.” And even though in times of crisis, the main concern of all media remains finding revenue, the CEO is convinced that the medium of radio in the general sense will always have its place in Luxembourg as it does abroad. “It will benefit from new digital technologies to be a presence everywhere, whenever and wherever it is wanted. I predict a great future for it,” he concludes.
Simon Cowell returns for *Britain’s Got Talent 2013*

**RTL Nederland**

Simon Cowell will return to the judges desk for the seventh series of Thames-produced *Britain’s Got Talent*. After a successful series in 2012, the same team reunites with Ant & Dec as hosts, while Simon is joined again by Amanda Holden, Alesha Dixon and David Walliams.

United Kingdom – 18 December 2012

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**Winning with original composition**

**RTL Television**

After playing his own song *Raus aus dem Nebel* and scoring 25.39 per cent of the viewer vote in the finale, 20-year-old Jean-Michel Aweh from Kassel emerged as the winner of *Das Supertalent* (Got Talent), walking away with the title and the €100,000 prize.

Germany – 17 December 2012

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**Standing united at Christmas**

**Bel RTL**

In Belgium, one person in five is living under the poverty line. On 13 December 2012, Bel RTL joined the Restos du Coeur and the public transit company Tec to collect food to help the most destitute.

Belgium – 14 December 2012

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**Helping abducted children**

**RTL 4**

From 16 December 2012, RTL 4 broadcast a new show called *Ontvoerd* (kidnapped) during prime time. In seven episodes, the show, which is presented by John van de Heuvel, sets out to solve international child abduction cases.

The Netherlands – 14 December 2012
FremantleMedia to develop Joan of Arc TV drama series

FremantleMedia has finalised a deal with award-winning writer Craig Pearce to develop *The Maid* into a television drama series for international audiences.

United Kingdom – 19 December 2012

Groupe M6 is the leader in Social TV

On 17 December 2012, Groupe M6 received recognition in the “Best Social TV Application” category at the 2012 Social Media Awards.

France – 19 December 2012

€12,000 for Germany’s Bundesverband Deutsche Tafel

This year, Super RTL realised its 5th “Toggo Kinder helfen Kindern” Christmas campaign – and with impressive success: more than 10,000 packages have already been received at GLS Parcel Shops, and will be distributed to needy families in time for Christmas.

Germany – 19 December 2012

The best season ever

On 18 December, RTL-TVI aired the last episode of *L’Amour est dans le pré*, Belgian version. It was a final rendezvous with the farmers of this fourth season that captured the attention of 586,600 viewers and allowed the programme to score its best season ever.

Belgium – 20 December 2012
Jacques Expert, previously the Programme Director of Paris Première, will join the teams of RTL Radio in France as Programme Director and Station Manager in the weeks to come.

In this position, Jacques Expert replaces Yves Bigot, who has been appointed General Manager of TV5 Monde. Christopher Baldelli, Chairman of the Management Board of RTL Group’s French radio stations, welcomes the arrival of Jacques Expert, “who knows our media well, having 13 years’ experience in radio. Jacques is a great media professional. I’m confident he will quickly put his experience and skills to work at RTL, as he shares our standards for quality, proximity and the audience’s tastes.”

Jacques Expert began his career in 1981 as a journalist at Radio Caraïbes International before joining France Inter and France Info as a journalist and reporter. From 1989 to 1993, he was a permanent special correspondent in Eastern Europe. He left Radio France in 1994 for Coyote Productions, where he was appointed Producer and Editor-in-Chief. In 1998, Jacques Expert joined Groupe M6, where he worked as the Director of the magazine programmes from 1998 to 2001. He subsequently served as Programme Director of Paris Première from 2001 to 2012. During this period, he returned to radio in the summer of 2011 and 2012, to work on the Histoires criminelles columns on France Info. Jacques Expert has also directed documentaries for Zone Interdite on M6. In the press, he has notably worked with L’Équipe Mag, Libération, Télérama, Lui and Le Nouvel Observateur.

Christopher Baldelli would like to “salute Yves Bigot’s contribution as Programme Director, which has contributed so much to the success of RTL Radio. All the teams at rue Bayard have enjoyed working with Yves and we wish him much success as the head of TV5 Monde.”
Season's Greetings!

The weekly Backstage Newsletter will be on Christmas holidays.

Starting on 3 January, you'll find daily news from RTL Group and its profit centres on http://backstage.rtlgroup.com

The next edition will be published on Thursday, 10 January 2013.
More about *Backstage*

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

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

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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.

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