PEDALLING FOR CHARITY

How RTL Group employees worked up a sweat for the 10 years of Télévie Challenge

Luxembourg
One year anniversary of the RTL Group re-IPO

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RTL Group: “Most attractive employer in Luxembourg 2014”

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RTL Group: “Most attractive employer in Luxembourg 2014”
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For the past ten years, helping to save lives has remained the clear focus of the Télévie Challenge, the Luxembourg site spinning event organised by RTL Group’s Corporate Centre in support of Télévie.

To mark this milestone anniversary, the organisers put together a special edition of the fundraising event, which raised a record total of no less than €73,000.
At the RTL Group in Luxembourg, the annual Télévie Challenge has become a fixture in the calendar of the company’s managers and employees alike. Organised in the fitness centre, the challenge entails inspiring as many relay teams as possible to pedal away non-stop for eight hours, covering the maximum distance in a bid to raise as much money as possible. For each kilometre cycled, RTL Group makes a donation (€5 in 2014), which is paid in full to Télévie.

26 April 2014: Taking the Télévie Challenge to the streets of Luxembourg

Based on the concept of the regular Télévie Challenge spinning event and to mark this year’s tenth anniversary, RTL Group decided to organise an additional initiative on 26 April 2014: the Télévie Challenge on Tour. “Our tour linking the pledging centres in Luxembourg once again demonstrated the importance of the cause for RTL Group and its employees” said, Elmar Heggen, CFO and Head of the RTL Group Corporate Centre.” Nearly 100 employees and participants from outside the company could opt to cycle all or just one or more sections of a 180 km route running through four of the five parts of Luxembourg that had Télévie sponsoring centres.

The participants included Elmar Heggen; Romain Mannelli, RTL Group’s EVP Human Resources and Chairman of its Corporate Responsibility Council; Steve Schmit, Programme Director at RTL Télé Lëtzebuerg; and the journalist and presenter Olivier Catani, whose face is very familiar to viewers in Luxembourg from his unstinting commitment to the gala evening show aired at the end of the Télévie Challenge, which he has co-presented on RTL Télé Lëtzebuerg for the past seven years: “The Télévie Challenge on Tour was a special experience for me. Over the last few years I have contributed to Télévie by hosting the programme, interviewing researchers or scientists and presenting reports on people who make great contributions to Télévie. This year’s ‘on Tour’ event really brought home the tremendous solidarity that Télévie can trigger in people.”

For every kilometre completed, RTL Group donated €1 to Télévie. The Télévie Challenge on Tour raised an additional €13,000 on top of the €60,000 already collected at the end of the Télévie Challenge on 28 March. The cheque for RTL Group’s total donation of €73,000 was handed over that very evening live on RTL Télé Lëtzebuerg during the Télévie 2014 closing ceremony. And since the Télévie Challenge on Tour proved such a great success, it has already been decided to repeat it in next year’s programme.
28 March 2014: All hearts at RTL Group were beating to the rhythm of the tenth Télévie Challenge

“This year’s special anniversary was an opportunity to celebrate the progress made so far,” said Heggen, “but we can’t afford to sit back on our laurels, because the statistics speak volumes. Every year, 2,000 adults and children in the Grand Duchy are diagnosed with cancer. I’d really like to thank our employees for putting such relentless effort into the Télévie Challenge over the past ten years. We truly admire their incredible dedication to a cause that is very dear to us”.

Elmar Heggen wouldn’t have missed Télévie for the world, and at noon he took delight in launching this year’s special edition of the event. The eager participants then mounted their spinning bikes with just one objective in mind: to smash the previous record of kilometres cycled.

Thirty-four teams, comprising a total of 370 participants, rose to the challenge. 230 of them were RTL Group employees, and the others were celebrity guests, including some of Luxembourg’s leading politicians and some top sports stars, who came especially to put in a shift themselves and show their support for the fight against cancer (see right box).

VIPS WHO TOOK UP THE TÉLÉVIE CHALLENGE

The sporting fraternity was represented by the triathlete Dirk Bockel, winner of the recent Ironman race in Melbourne and Luxembourg’s 2013 Athlete of the Year; the former soccer professional Gordon Braun, who is a member of the Télévie non-profit association; and the swimmer Laurent Carnol, who reached the semi-finals of the 200 metres breaststroke at the London Olympics in 2012. This year’s loyal participants from the world of politics included Sports Minister Romain Schneider and the President of Luxembourg’s Chamber of Deputies, Mars di Bartoloméo.

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Télévie Challenge 2014: €60,000 for the benefit of Télévie.
(From left to right) Dr Marc Diederich, Carol Bragança-Kayser, Elmar Heggen and Romain Mannelli.
For the ten years of Télévie Challenge, RTL Group was particularly generous, doubling the amount it donated per kilometre during the tenth shift between 17:00 and 18:00 to €10. Other initiatives designed to further boost the total raised for Télévie included the sale of RTL Group merchandise.

Showing tremendous commitment, the participants covered a highly impressive 8,621 kilometres, raising €48,965. On top of this came €4,300 from the sale of merchandise, bringing the total up to €53,265, which RTL Group generously rounded up to €60,000. This was the grand total announced after the end of the event by Elmar Heggen, in the presence of Carol Bragança-Kayser, Télévie Coordinator in Luxembourg, and Dr Marc Diederich, from the Cancer Research Centre at Luxembourg’s Kirchberg Hospital.

"OVER THE PAST TEN YEARS, THE TÉLÉVIE CHALLENGE HAS ENABLED US TO FUND RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT HAVE IMPROVED OUR UNDERSTANDING OF LEUKAEMIA, COLON CANCER AND BREAST CANCER"

Dr Marc Diederich

"The funds raised by the Télévie Challenge have made an exemplary contribution to the development of the research laboratory at Kirchberg Hospital," said Dr Diederich. "Over the past ten years, the Télévie Challenge has enabled us to fund research projects that have improved our understanding of leukaemia, colon cancer and breast cancer. Furthermore, the mechanisms of an innovative molecule were studied in a clinical trial. So a huge thank you to all Télévie athletes from Luxembourg’s researchers."

Télévie 2014: a record-breaking total in excess of €9 million

On 26 April 2014, alike RTL Télé Lëtzebuerg, RTL Belgium aired its own Télévie show, which raised more than €9 million (€9,027,731 to be precise, including €1,389,098 donated by participants and viewers in Luxembourg) for cancer research. This was more than the total raised in 2013 and set a new record for the event.

ABOUT TÉLÉVIE

Télévie is a charity channel founded in 1989 by RTL-TVI in Belgium and in 2002 by RTL Lëtzebuerg in Luxembourg. The unwavering dedication of the two RTL Group families of channels has now raised over €142 million (the exact figure is €142,896,507) since the event’s launch (figures as at 26 April 2014).

In Luxembourg, part of the donations made to Télévie goes to the Cancer Laboratory of Molecular and Cellular Biology (LBMCC) at Kirchberg Hospital. In 2013, six research projects were financed thanks to Télévie.

RTL Group started staging the Télévie Challenge, its very own sporting event to raise money for this worthy cause, back in 2005. Since then, more than €500,000 has been raised, with all the proceeds going to Luxembourg’s National Scientific Research Fund (FNRS).
One year ago today, RTL Group shares debuted on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange – the major corporate story of 2013. It was the largest media IPO in Europe since 2004. *Backstage* takes a look at the story behind the success, taken from RTL Group’s new Annual Report 2013.

Luxembourg – 30 April 2014

As a result of the public offering, 24.1 per cent of RTL Group’s shares are available to be publicly traded and Bertelsmann has raised a total of €1.5 billion. RTL Group now has approximately 160 new major shareholders, mostly investment funds, half from the UK, but also from the US, Switzerland and other countries.

“It was the right time to go ahead with the IPO,” says *Elmar Heggen*, RTL Group’s CFO, “investors are convinced that the company is in a good position to execute its growth plans and strategy, and that we will produce a significant cash flow, and also return cash to shareholders.”

This new set of shareholders will, of course, mean there is a higher degree of awareness of RTL Group in financial circles, more public discussion and increased analyst scrutiny. But will it change the way RTL Group is run? “Not really,” says Elmar Heggen, “We will continue to run the company with a medium to long-term view rather than from quarter to quarter. Our governance, compliance and reporting strategies are already in place and of the highest order. It’s essentially the same environment we had before. And this is one of the reasons we could complete the IPO so quickly.”
Which isn’t to say it was easy. Various market factors meant it was preferable to squeeze into three and a half months, to the end of April 2013, a process which normally takes six months. The preparation of the legally-binding prospectus, countless meetings with rooms full of bankers, auditors and lawyers, preparation of full-year closing accounts and end of January closing accounts – all put enormous pressure on everyone involved, but all progressed reasonably smoothly.

Towards the end of the process, in April, senior management embarked on a two week ‘investor education’ roadshow, travelling to London, Paris, Geneva, Frankfurt, New York and Boston. “The aim was to establish a level of trust and confidence in RTL Group,” Elmar Heggen explains. “We met representatives from more than 200 investment institutions in 60 one-to-one and several group meetings, and the conversion rate – that is, those who bought – was 77 per cent.”

Andrew Buckhurst, Senior Vice President Investor Relations, adds: “The feedback from investors was that they respected the Group’s strong management team, and believed RTL Group to be a high quality asset with strong cash flows. In short: one of the best broadcasting groups in Europe.”

Now, in addition to existing listings on the Luxembourg Stock Exchange and Euronext Brussels, RTL Group shares have been listed in the Prime Standard segment of the Frankfurt Stock Exchange since 30 April 2013. In September RTL Group shares were included in the prestigious MDax index. Later in 2013, it was announced that the shares would be included in the Stoxx Europe 600 index, covering 18 European countries, as well as the Euronext Bel Mid index, and the Morgan Stanley Capital International index. “The more indices we are represented on, the better the trading volume,” explains Elmar Heggen, “many investors try to replicate an index in their portfolios, and so need to acquire shares.”
Six months after the IPO, the Group held its first Investor & Analyst Day, in Cologne on 1 October. “Eight banks were involved in the IPO,” says Andrew Buckhurst, “and this was the opportunity to increase other financial institutions’ understanding of the business and answer their questions. Senior management were available and we were also able to put some of the business unit CEOs in the spotlight.”

In addition to presentations from Guillaume de Posch and Anke Schäferkordt, the Co-CEOs, and Elmar Heggen, attendees also received briefings on some of the Group’s more intricate initiatives and strategies from Cécile Frot-Coutaz of FremantleMedia, Bert Habets of RTL Nederland, and Shahrzad Rafati of BroadbandTV. All told, over 40 analysts and investors travelled to Cologne for the day. “The fact that so many attended shows the interest in the Group and the importance of events such as these,” says Andrew Buckhurst.

There will be more investor meetings to come in the senior management calendar, but looking back to the work leading up to the IPO itself, the consensus seems to be that it was ultimately an enjoyable experience, but not one you’d choose to partake in too often. “People had to be extremely flexible, and a lot of holidays were cancelled, but the cross-functional collaboration and co-ordination at the Corporate Centre was a great show of teamwork and it passed what was a stern test with flying colours,” recalls Andrew Buckhurst. “Quite simply,” concludes Elmar Heggen, “the IPO wouldn’t have been possible without us relying on people from all departments, business units and senior management, so thank you to everyone – we are very grateful for your support.”

“\textit{The significantly higher free float of RTL Group shares has not changed our strategy or management. RTL Group is now certainly under more intense scrutiny than before, but we will not strive for quarterly profit maximisation just to drive the share price up in the short-term.}”

Read the story in RTL Group’s Annual report 2013
RTL Group was voted “most attractive employer” in the Greater Region of Luxembourg, according to the recent Randstad Awards survey. The results were presented at the prize giving ceremony at Hotel Double Tree by Hilton in Luxembourg.

Luxembourg – 28 April 2014

For the award, the 30 largest private companies in the Greater Region of Luxembourg (Saar, Lorraine, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Rhénanie-Palatinat, Wallonie, the French and German communities in Belgium) were surveyed in an employer branding study that was conducted by independent research company ICMA.

RTL Group emerged as the “most attractive employer” in the survey as 51 per cent of the persons surveyed declared that they would like to work for RTL Group.

Romain Mannelli, Executive Vice President Human Resources at RTL Group, said: “We are extremely honoured by the results of this survey. For more than ten years, we have put significant focus on fostering a valuable corporate culture as well as a pleasant and stimulating working environment. In today’s highly competitive job market, we are continually challenged to attract and retain the most talented people. It is through our employees that we succeeded in building a recognised employer brand.”

The survey was carried out between December 2013 and January 2014, with a panel of 1,000 people aged between 18 and 65. The panel was asked to evaluate the relative attractiveness of each of the selected companies on a series of criteria such as salary, employee benefits, career opportunities, job security and work environment to name but a few.

It was the first time in the 14-year history of the Randstad Award that the Greater Region of Luxembourg took part in the online survey, which is now conducted in 23 countries.
US cable network A&E has picked up ten episodes of FremantleMedia North America and A&E Studios co-production, *The Returned*. Carlton Cuse (Bate’s Motel) will oversee the production alongside Raelle Tucker (True Blood). Casting will begin immediately on the series and production will begin in the summer.

*The Returned* marks the first series order to come out of A+E Studios. **Thom Beers**, CEO FremantleMedia North America (FMNA) : “*Les Revenants* has proven to be both a critical and commercial success worldwide and we couldn’t be more excited to partner with A&E on this adaptation. Carlton and Raelle, the creative forces behind such fantastic television as *Lost* and *True Blood*, are the perfect combination to bring this complicated and provocative family drama to U.S. audiences.”

Fabrice Gobert’s Peabody-winning *The Returned* is based on the feature film *Les Revenants* from director Robin Campillo. The French series, which has been renewed for a second season in the US on Sundance TV, is an International Emmy-wining drama set in a French mountain town where several local people who have long been presumed dead suddenly reappear. They bring with them both positive and detrimental consequences. As families are reunited, the lives of those who were left behind are challenged on a physical and emotional level. Interpersonal relationships are examined with intrigue and depth as strange phenomena begin to occur.

*The Returned* is co-produced by A+E Studios and FMNA in association with Haut et Court TV SAS, the producer of the French series. Cuse will executive produce via his Carlton Cuse Productions banner alongside Tucker for Angry Annie Productions. Thom Beers, Craig Cegielski, Executive Vice President and Stefanie Berk Senior Vice President of Scripted Programming and Development will oversee for FMNA, which will distribute the series internationally, excluding the U.S. and Canada. A+E Studios will distribute in the U.S. in Canada.
Atresmedia publishes first quarter results

Atresmedia

On 24 April 2014, Atresmedia published its financials for the first quarter of 2014. Profiting from Spain’s recovering TV advertising market, Atresmedia’s EBITDA for the first quarter of 2014 was at €12.5 million, a 55.3 per cent increase year-on-year.

Spain – 25 April 2014

RTL Television realigns Commit Award

RTL Television

Under the heading ‘We’re looking for young heroes’, RTL Television sets out to honour young people who are not only active athletes, but also get involved in the community and get other people excited about sports.

Germany – 25 April 2014

W9 retains the rights to the Europa League

W9

W9 renews its rights to broadcast Europa League matches until 2018. With an average of 1.4 million viewers for the primetime games since the beginning of the season, the Europa League is a flagship broadcast for the channel.

France – 30 April 2014

The 57th RTL Journée de L’Emploi

RTL Radio

RTL Radio in France partnered with Syntec Numérique for the ‘RTL Employment day’, allowing listeners to discover professions in the digital industry, a sector where 35,000 recruits are expected in 2014.

France – 28 April 2014
Niels Baas has been appointed Managing Director of NLziet. He will head the joint VOD subscription-based service set up by RTL Nederland together with NPO and SBS starting 1 May 2014.

He is taking over from Rachelle van der Linden, who led the project on an interim basis and who will be on board until 1 July as an advisor. Besides the general management of the service, which gives users unlimited access to platforms RTL XL, NPO Plus and Kijk for a monthly fee, Baas will be in charge of further developing it. His first tasks will be to set up a dedicated team and launch NLziet. The launch is planned for later this quarter.

In the past years Baas was among others General Manager at MTV Networks Nederland, where he was responsible for the reorganisation of the channel’s programming portfolio. In February 2012 he became Commercial Director of Inforatra Creative Technology. In this capacity he was in charge of positioning the company on the video on demand market as one of the biggest providers in the Netherlands.

Bert Habets, CEO of RTL Nederland comments: “Niels Baas is the typical example of an all-rounder. He knows the media sector and has acquired experience and knowledge in all areas of it. This goes from marketing to the development of digital strategies to sales and general management experience. Moreover, thanks to his versatility, he will be able to satisfactorily serve the interests of all three parties.”
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