EUROPE VOTES

How RTL Group’s broadcasters cover the world’s second-biggest democratic election

Luxembourg / Croatia
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RTL – Wir helfen Kindern opens a Children’s House in Warsaw

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A Dramatic shift

France
M6 rises to the top in the early evening
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In view of the upcoming European elections, Backstage takes a look at how RTL Group’s broadcasters cover this major political event across its TV channels, radio stations and digital platforms.

WHEN LEADING POLITITIANS HAVE A MESSAGE TO GET ACROSS, RTL’S AUDIENCES SOON KNOW ABOUT IT
From 22 to 25 May 2014, European citizens are called to vote for the politicians who will represent them on a European Union level. These politicians are Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), who will represent the interest of over 500 million citizens in 28 member states for the next five years.

With their clear commitment to independent news reporting, RTL Group’s broadcasters across Europe will cover this major event in typical RTL style: easy to understand, up to date and with a strong local presence.

In Germany, the news channel N-TV will feature detailed coverage of the European elections. From 18:00 on Election Sunday, N-TV will broadcast a special entitled Wahlen 2014 – Europa with all the relevant information about the European elections. Presenter Christoph Teuner and politics expert Heiner Bremer will analyse the results and put them in context.

Earlier in the week, on 22 and 23 May at 12:30 and 13:30, N-TV will run election specials with background information on the elections from Germany and other European countries. Among other things, the increase in Euro-critical parties and nationalist tendencies will be discussed. On 23 May, Auslandsreport will also report from member states on the occasion of the European elections. In Athens, reporter Nadja Kriewald captures the mood on the ground and reports on topics including the die-hard optimists who have triggered a veritable start-up boom in the Greek capital, defying the crisis with lots of fresh ideas. The programme also travels to France, where more and more people sympathize with the anti-European ‘Front National’ party. After the European elections, N-TV will broadcast all of the major parties’ press conferences. In addition, the big political event will be the focus topic in Heiner Bremer’s talk show in a special issue of Das Duell bei N-TV at 17:10 on Monday.

In the run-up to the elections, RTL Television broadcast a three-part reportage series on important issues across Europe, and will report on Election Day itself. At 18:00, a short election special will kick things off with initial projections from selected countries, before RTL Aktuell takes a detailed look at the elections at 18:45. Between 22:00 and 23:00, the channel will broadcast an update with the presentation of results by the election officials.
RTL Radio: “Draw a clear dividing line between fantasy and reality”

After the municipal elections in March, RTL Radio is maintaining its focus on event-based broadcasting by following its TV colleagues in providing special coverage of the European elections.

RTL is a mandatory way station for politicians intent on getting across their own personal message or presenting their party line, and the radio station sees its main role here as an educator: “Our aim is to make the event seem really relevant to our listeners, against a backdrop of euroscepticism and widespread abstention”, says Elizabeth Martichoux, Head of RTL’s political bureau. “Our prime objective is to get them interested, explain the issues, provide them with all the information they need to draw a clear dividing line between fantasy and reality, and thus enable them to form an opinion”. By way of an example, a special version of the legendary RTL programme Stop ou Encore (Stop Or Continue?), dubbed L’Europe: Stop ou Encore?, has been broadcast during the station’s morning show, RTL Matin, to help listeners gain an overview of the core issues being debated in France.

Other key elements in RTL’s special election coverage are the columns L’Europe mode d’emploi (Europe, A User’s Guide), which airs during the station’s midday slot, RTL Midi, and endeavours to inform listeners about the practicalities of voting, and its portraits of campaigning would-be MEPs broadcast during its evening show, RTL Soir (until 23 May). RTL’s election night special will start at 18:00 on 25 May and continue until 22:00 presented by Elisabeth Martichoux and Jérôme Chapuis, the Co-Presenter of Grand Jury RTL-Le Figaro-LCI, in partnership with the polling institute TNS Sofres.

RTL RADIO’S ELECTION NIGHT SPECIAL ON 25 MAY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TNS SOFRES:

- 20:15 – results of an exit poll in Germany
- 20:30 – results of an exclusive pre-election poll in the 28 EU Member States
- 21:00 – estimation of the voting turnout in most of the countries involved
- All during the night – projected composition of the next European Parliament

Of course, the editorial team of the RTL.fr website will remain busy throughout the entire campaign. On 13 May, France’s leading radio station broadcast a live video debate between Jean-Claude Juncker and Martin Schulz, the two leading contenders in the race to become the new President of the European Commission. Similarly, the radio station’s election night special on 25 May will also involve live video coverage, and an interactive map of the results will be posted online.
M6: special extended edition of the news
"As with all news since the launch of our early evening news programme 19.45, the coverage of the European elections on M6 will essentially aim to inform and be interactive, endeavouring to provide the clearest possible interpretation of the outcome of the election" says the French TV channel's Editor-in-Chief, Stéphane Gendarme.

On 25 May, a special extended edition of the news, 15 minutes longer than usual, presented by Nathalie Renoux, will present and analyse initial estimates of the election results. At 20:00 there will be live commentary and a discussion on the projected balance of power between the main French parties, drawn up in conjunction with pollsters at Harris Interactive and the daily newspaper Le Parisien/Aujourd'hui en France. Teams on the ground will provide film footage and there will be live link-ups with four journalists at the headquarters of the various political parties. Finally, the edition of 12.45 aired on Monday, 26 May will be almost entirely devoted to the election results.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS REGARDING AIR TIME IN FRANCE:

To guarantee pluralism during the election campaign, French radio stations and TV channels have to respect the principle of equity, allotting speaking time or air time to the election candidates (or political parties) and their aides, taking account of their representativeness and actual involvement in the campaign.

In the Netherlands, RTL 4's main news show RTL Nieuws will report extensively about the elections. The same is true for the informational programming window RTL Z which is broadcast during daytime on RTL 7. Additionally, RTL Nederland’s digital platforms will feature some special pages with all kinds of information all around the topic.

Belgium: at the forefront of the European Elections

In view of the upcoming European elections to be held in Belgium on 25 May, RTL Belgium has pulled out all the stops in covering this major political event on its flagship TV channel RTL-TVI, radio stations Bel RTL and Radio Contact, as well as on its digital platforms. On the same day, in addition to the European elections, Belgian voters will decide on their regional and federal representatives. Commenting on the coverage of the European elections, Laurent Haulotte Head of News & Deputy Director of Television at RTL Belgium, says: “RTL Belgium has put news at the heart of its
activities and priorities in its quest to get closer to its audience. It is therefore essential for us to ensure comprehensive coverage of the 2014 elections. This triple ballot -- regional, federal and European – is crucial for the future of Belgium. It is only logical for us to deploy substantial resources to give our audiences the keys to understand the issues and follow the results.”

On 18 May 2014, flagship channel RTL-TVI dedicated its debate programme Controverse to the European pre-electoral campaign. The invitees’ list included the heads of the European tickets for Belgium, as well as Guy Verhofstadt, candidate nominated for the presidency of the European Commission by the Liberal parties and former Prime Minister of Belgium. The European elections will also be present on the satire show Votez pour moi (Vote for me). Debarked on RTL-TVI from Bel RTL, these comedy sketches also parody the European political scenery.

Radio Contact opted to focus on European topics from the perspective of younger people. From 19 May to 23 May, European candidates have been invited to answer a number of questions of relevance to the topics faced by young generation on the radio programme 180 Secondes de Vérité (180 seconds of truth).

As far as the digital coverage is concerned, RTL Belgium news website RTLInfo.be will be covering this event before, during and after the European elections. Moreover, a month before the elections, the website launched an online test under the title ‘La Voix des Belges’ (‘The Belgians’ Voice). This test is designed to identify thorny questions preoccupying Belgian voters, including topics related to the EU affairs. Via this test, RTL Belgium’s editorial department has been able to regularly take the pulse of the voters and thus provide on-air reports on the most pressing issues.

On 25 May 2014, Croatian will vote for their European Parliament candidates. Throughout the day, the RTL Televizija News team, situated at various locations – from local polling stations, Croatian political party headquarters and from the European Union capital, Brussels – will bring the latest news to Croatian citizens. RTL Vjesti will be broadcast at 16:30 with the official statements of the political party representatives, RTL Danas (the main news) hosted by Ana Brdarčić Boljat, will come after at 18:30, followed by special news edition completely dedicated to the European elections at 21:00, hosted by Igor Bobić. The day will be wrapped up with the late news special at 23:00.

Ivan Lovreček, RTL Televizija Editor-in-Chief, says: “Because of disastrous floods that afflicted eastern Croatia, the interest for the European Parliament elections is put aside in Croatia right now. The majority of candidates have aborted the campaign and joined the public in efforts to help those who have been struck by this natural disaster. However, the Elections will take place and are nonetheless very important for Croatia as a new member of EU. Sunday, 25 May will be dedicated to the Elections through special editions of the News – voter turnout, the first polling results and statements by leading politicians and live reports will dominate the day.”
ABOUT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

It is the only European institution whose members are directly elected by the European citizens. Since 1979, the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have been elected every five years by direct universal suffrage.

Each member state has a fixed number of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). For the 2014 election, under the Lisbon Treaty, the number of MEPs ranges from six each for Malta, Luxembourg, Cyprus and Estonia to 96 for Germany, making a total of 751.

Source: www.europarl.europa.eu

WHY ARE THESE ELECTIONS DIFFERENT?

These are the first elections since the Lisbon Treaty of 2009 which granted to the European Parliament a number of important new powers. One major new development under the Lisbon Treaty is that the European Parliament’s role in electing the Commission President has become more prominent. The European Council, composed of the EU’s heads of state and government, need to base their proposal for a candidate Commission President on the results of the European Parliament elections. The European Parliament will then vote on the proposed candidate. The candidate must be approved by a majority of MEPs to be elected.

Source: www.europarl.europa.eu

POLITICAL PARTIES NOMINATE THEIR CANDIDATES FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Of the 13 European political parties, five have nominated a candidate to succeed the current Commission President. The EPP has nominated Jean-Claude Juncker, former Luxembourg prime minister and former Eurogroup president, the PES candidate is Martin Schulz, current president of the European Parliament, the Liberals and Democrats have opted for Guy Verhofstadt, former Belgian prime minister and current Liberal group leader in the EP, the Greens have nominated a duo of current MEPs, French José Bové and German Ska Keller, while the European Left have put forward Alexis Tsipras, leader of the Greek SYRIZA party.

Source: www.europarl.europa.eu
EU regulation has an impact on the audiovisual media industry in a wide range of areas. These include well-known rules in the linear TV environment (for instance, on advertising) as well as new initiatives aimed at fostering a sustainable online ecosystem for creative content. EU legislation relevant for the broadcasting sector includes the Audiovisual Media Services Directive, the Copyright Directive and the Cable and Satellite Directive. Important issues such as net neutrality and data protection, critical in the digital age, are also being addressed by on-going EU initiatives.

Europe therefore plays a key role in fostering creativity and investment in content, as well as enabling commercial broadcasters to deliver their programming to EU citizens (often across borders). This allows RTL Group’s broadcasters to do what they do best: provide high-quality content to their audience.
RTL Group announced the appointment of Henning Tewes (42), Managing Director of the news provider Enex, as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of RTL Hrvatska with effect from 1 July 2014.

Luxembourg / Croatia – 16 May 2012

Tewes will succeed Johannes Züll (49) who will leave RTL Group to become CEO at the German production company Studio Hamburg.

Following a proposal from Henning Tewes, Ivan Lovrecek (37), currently Editor-in-chief of RTL Hrvatska and a member of the company’s Executive Board, will be promoted to Deputy CEO of RTL Hrvatska, also effective 1 July 2014.

Andreas Rudas, Executive Vice President Regional Operations & Business Development CEE and Asia at RTL Group and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of RTL Hrvatska, says: “I am delighted that we have found such a dynamic and experienced management team for our Croatian family of channels from within RTL Group. Henning Tewes combines business acumen and leadership skills with a strong track record in programming. He is deeply familiar with RTL Group and the international TV industry and is an excellent choice to lead and grow RTL Hrvatska into the next phase of its development.

I congratulate Ivan Lovrecek on his promotion to Deputy CEO. His thorough understanding of the local market, leadership in news and magazines and experience in building our Croatian family of channels is key to our future plans.”

Andreas Rudas continues: “I would also like to thank Johannes Züll for his important achievements. During his time as head of RTL in Croatia, he ensured the financial sustainability of RTL Hrvatska and the re-licensing of the main channel RTL Televizija through 2029. At the same time, he built a complementary family of channels with two new channels – RTL 2 and RTL Kockica.”

The Enex Board of Directors has launched the process of finding a successor of Henning Tewes who expressed his gratitude towards the Enex employees, thanking them for the accomplishments, trust and support during his two years at the helm of the news provider.
Henning Tewes, born in 1972, holds a Masters in Political Science, History and Economics from Oxford University, a PhD from Birmingham University, and an MBA from Insead (France/Singapore). He joined RTL Group in 2005 and was Vice President Corporate Strategy before becoming part of the management team of Alpha TV in Greece, most recently as Programme Director. In July 2012, Henning Tewes became Managing Director of the Luxembourg-based, RTL Group-led news exchange Enex. Under his leadership, Enex grew its number of broadcasting partners from 29 to 42, transforming the company from a technical service provider into a global news provider active on all five continents. Prior to joining RTL Group, Henning Tewes worked for the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, a German NGO where he was Country Director for Poland and Belarus.

Ivan Lovrecek, born 1976, began his media career in 1996 as a radio journalist. He joined RTL Hrvatska in March 2004 as a reporter covering major domestic and international events. In June 2005 he was promoted to Daily News Editor, and in 2007 he was appointed Editor-in-Chief of RTL Hrvatska. Two years later, in September 2009, he became a member of the company’s Management Board. Prior to his career at RTL Hrvatska, Ivan Lovrecek worked from 2000 to 2004 as a News Producer and Presenter at the BBC World Service in London and Zagreb.
Lukas Podolski, football celebrity and RTL – Wir helfen Kindern mentor, joins children in his native Poland in opening an RTL Children’s House in the Prada Polnoc district of Warsaw.

Germany – 22 May 2014

RTL – Wir helfen Kindern donated 935,000 EUR so that the centre for socially disadvantaged children and young people could begin operations. Since 2011, Lukas “Poldi” Podolski has devoted himself to the project in his role as an RTL - Wir helfen Kindern mentor.

Lukas Podolski

Lukas Podolski says: “For me, this is a dream come true. I still have a lot of family here in Poland. To open a children’s house here makes me very proud and happy. I had my father, who always supported me. Most of the children here have no one. I hope that this will change now and that they will get help and work toward their goals instead of just hanging around.”

In Poland, more than a third of all children under the age of 15 live in poverty. The Praga Polnoc district of Warsaw is an area of high social deficits, difficult financial situations, and widespread psychological problems in children and adults. The behavioural problems most commonly seen in the area’s children are learning difficulties, disciplinary problems, low self-esteem, a disregard for social norms and principles, and experimentation with alcohol and cigarettes. Children from families with alcohol problems, poor families, and families with domestic violence issues are potential protégés in disciplinary institutions where they do not get any support or individual encouragement and cannot escape the vicious cycle.

The opening of the RTL Children’s House creates a destination for children and teens that will accompany provide long-term support on their way to adulthood. The idea is to give these disadvantaged youngsters new prospects for the future and to help them to find a path to finishing school and leading a structured and meaningful life in spite of their difficult environment.
Beside FremantleMedia’s accomplishments in non-scripted programmes, the global production company aims to reach the same level of success with its scripted drama production. *Backstage* took a further look at this development in RTL Group’s Annual Report 2013.

United Kingdom – 20 May 2014

FremantleMedia boasts a proud history in drama production, with number one daily dramas in Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy and Poland and around 1,500 hours of scripted content produced every year.

Yet over the past decade, an outsider could be forgiven for thinking otherwise, given the company’s outstanding successes in non-scripted entertainment shows. But now, with many new initiatives and appointments, and a strategic acquisition or two, scripted is set to restore the balance.

“In world television, drama is now king, and therefore a priority for us,” explains Sarah Doole, FremantleMedia’s Director of Global Drama, who has moved to the company from BBC Worldwide. “If you can create high-end drama, you can engage audiences around the world, you can sell it at premium price, and it stays in your catalogue for the next 25 years.”

FremantleMedia is strengthening its growing scripted business through acquisition, and in November 2013 took a majority stake in pre-eminent Danish production company Miso Film. Miso has enjoyed huge ratings success across Scandinavia with both series and feature length films.

“We’re really excited about Miso,” says Sarah Doole: “These guys are at the top of their game – very accomplished producers. They’ve had great success with *Dicte*, about the life of a female crime reporter in Denmark, which is definitely the kind of drama to suit early prime-time around the world – we now have series two in production.”

One of 2013’s major successes is FremantleMedia Australia’s remake of the iconic Australian series *Prisoner*. Like the original, *Wentworth* follows the struggles and personal lives of the inmates in a women’s prison. It has sold well in markets all around the world, including to Channel 5 in the UK where it has proved a real hit with the audiences (more than two million viewers each week). “Australia makes some fantastic drama for their home market and, as a territory, it will become a jewel in our crown,” says Sarah Doole, “*Wentworth* is a break-out
hit — stylish, addictive and brilliantly written. Foxtel were thrilled and immediately commissioned season two, and have commissioned season three before season two has even aired. Several of our European producers are looking at remakes. Our German producers are already working closely with the production team in Australia on a German language adaptation, which I think is a fascinating collaboration. A Dutch version – entitled Celblock-H – premiered on SBS6 in Holland on 3 March 2014,” – and has recently been recommissioned for a second season.

“The standard of our German drama is wonderful,” continues Sarah Doole, “it’s so filmic, with great storytelling. Generation War is the best example – a really gritty, emotionally-engaging tale. It has been picked up around the world and, most excitingly, BBC2 have bought it in the UK. For a prime-time major channel to present a subtitled German drama to an English-speaking audience is something of an accolade. I think it will open the floodgates for the quality drama we have coming

Meanwhile, in North America, Craig Cegielski has joined FremantleMedia as Executive Vice President, Scripted Programming and Development, as the company looks to grow its scripted business, and change its perception with US networks. “In a very competitive landscape, with most studios aligned to networks, it’s important that we set ourselves apart by offering content that’s sophisticated and elevated,” explains Craig Cegielski: “We’ve sent a message to the marketplace that we’re looking to acquire properties that reflect this.”

One such initiative is the co-production with A&E Studios of mystery thriller *The Returned*, based on the popular French suspense series where several local people, long presumed dead, return to a small town. *The Returned* was recently picked up by A&E. FremantleMedia will also distribute the series outside the US and Canada. Other deals going to production include scripted series based on Carl Hiaasen’s best seller *Basket Case*, in conjunction with Random House, and a series based on the award winning novel *American Gods* by Neil Gaiman is on the cards, FMNA having bought the book rights. All in all, the company has nine shows in development, suggesting the balance between drama and entertainment is already on the move.

A final word from Sarah Doole: “We’re looking at a world where the boundaries of language are being broken down in drama, and within the next few years we’ll have a situation where, if it’s a brilliant, compelling story, it will travel everywhere.”
On 14 May 2014, Les Reines du Shopping and La Meilleure Boulangerie de France, which air consecutively on M6, allowed the channel to take the lead in access prime time.

France – 16 May 2014

The programme Les Reines du Shopping, presented by Christina Cordula, gathered around 900,000 viewers, equivalent to an audience share of 23.1 per cent of housewives under 50 (the average audience share in 2013 was 16.2 per cent). This allowed M6 to rank as the leading channel within that target group.

La Meilleure Boulangerie de France followed suit on the same evening with around 1.3 million viewers. It set a new record for this year with a total audience share of 12.1 per cent (the average audience share in 2013 was 10.6 per cent). M6 ranked as the number two channel with this target group as well as the number two channel with housewives under 50, with an audience share of 16.7 per cent.

Les Reines du Shopping and La Meilleure Boulangerie de France, air Monday to Friday at 16:25 and 17:25 respectively on M6.
Family Feud Slovakia shoots its 1000th episode

5 Profi 5, the Slovakian version of Family Feud, recently filmed its 1000th episode at the RTVS studios. The quiz show, which airs daily, was first broadcast in Slovakia in September 2007. Pictured are Andrea Gavacova (left), FremantleMedia Format Sales Director for Central & Eastern Europe, with the show’s host, Andrej Bičan.
New research app

IP Deutschland

IP Deutschland launched a mobile opinion-survey platform for executives: My News Panel.

Germany – 16 May 2014

The daily programme from Cannes

Bel RTL

From 18 to 25 May, Tapis Rouge (Red Carpet), the programme for cinema lovers on Belgian radio station Bel RTL, has its studio set up in Cannes. Presenters Bérénice and Nicolas Buytaers will help listeners experience the festival with live reports.

Belgium – 16 May 2014

Be a VIP!

RTL Nederland

Anyone who buys a ticket for the RTL Zomerfestival on June 21 in Zwolle is eligible to win ‘RTL VIP’ status – i.e. exclusive access to the RTL world for a year.

The Netherlands – 19 May 2014

Fun Radio gives away tickets for the World Cup

Fun Radio

Until 23 May 2014, the French ‘dancefloor’ radio station gave listeners of the morning show Bruno dans la Radio a chance to win two VIP tickets to the FIFA World Cup Finale in Rio de Janeiro.

France – 20 May 2014

RTL interviews Burger King CEO

Andreas Bork

RTL Television

A few weeks after the broadcast of the Team Wallraff programme about intolerable conditions at a Burger King franchisee, Andreas Bork, CEO of Burger King Beteiligungs GmbH, responds in person in an interview with the magazine show Extra.

Germany – 21 May 2014
The new Managing Director of RTL II is Andreas Bartl. He began his TV career in 1990 at ProSieben, where until 2000 he helped manage the programme line-up then worked as a Head of Programming. From 2000 to 2005, he was Managing Director of kabel eins, from 2005 to 2008 Managing Director of ProSieben, and from 2008 to 2012 Managing Director Television at ProSiebenSat.1 Media AG. Bartl has worked as a freelance media entrepreneur since 2012.

Anke Schäferkordt, Chair of the RTL II Shareholders’ Meeting, said: “On behalf of all RTL II shareholders, I’d like to thank Jochen Starke for his achievements in managing the channel, and wish him all the best in his future career. I’m delighted that in Andreas Bartl an accomplished and creative TV expert has taken over as head of RTL II who has both a profound knowledge of the German media landscape and many years of programme experience.”

Andreas Bartl: “I look forward to working at RTL II! Managing this innovative and well-positioned TV channel is a very exciting assignment.”
FremantleMedia Asia has announced the appointment of Michelle Landy to the newly-created role of Chief Operating Officer, based in Singapore and effective 23 June, as the company steps up its investments in Asia.

Reporting to Managing Director Paul O’Hanlon, Michelle joins FremantleMedia Asia with a decade’s experience with FremantleMedia across two continents. In her previous New York based role as SVP Legal & Business Affairs, she was responsible for a range of commercial deals and brand extension/licensing matters related to television, digital and lifestyle brands and properties. This included consumer products, technology (interactive/digital/new media), integrated marketing, sponsorship and promotions, live events and gaming, as well as original digital content, brand representations, acquisitions and new business ventures.

Born in Australia, Michelle began her career as a lawyer, and worked at FremantleMedia in London before moving to the US business. She has a Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Laws from Monash University in Melbourne.

Paul O’Hanlon, FremantleMedia Asia Managing Director, says: “Michelle’s appointment enables our business to expand its ability to produce world-class programming and to provide best-in-class commercial solutions to our broad customer base. Our Asian operation is going from strength to strength and continues to evolve at great speed with shows like X Factor Around the World, Got Talent, Idols and Take Me Out, just to name a few. Michelle is an outstanding executive. Her invaluable global experience will be a great addition to our Asian operations.”

Michelle Landy says: “I am thrilled to be joining the Asian company at such an exciting time. FremantleMedia’s global television brands have really resonated with Asian audiences so the potential for further development of these brands and fresh new ideas makes this role very exciting.”
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For more information, don’t hesitate to contact the editorial team: Backstage@rtlgroup.com