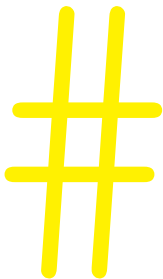


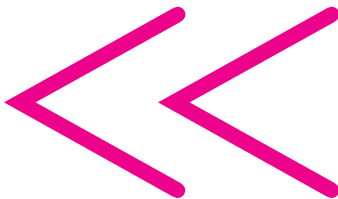
Author Peter Hossli interviewed: «There's no such thing as quality journalism»

DOMO

(Marc Walder explains)



62W
> + <
52L



{ **Blockchain**
Why media companies are taking
a close look at this technology. }

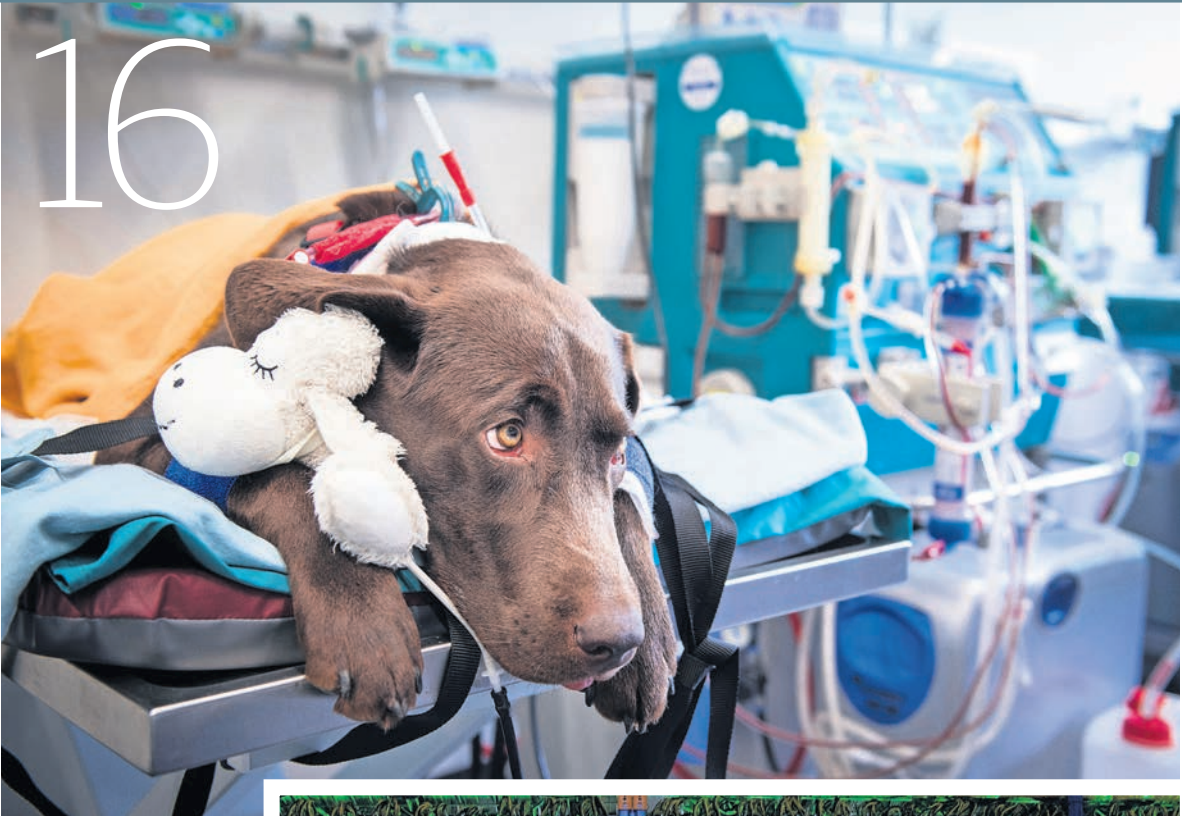
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Cover Concept: Zuni Halpern

Publishing information

Publisher: Ringier AG, Corporate Communications, Dufourstrasse 23, 8008 Zurich. **Contact:** domo@ringier.ch **Editor-in-chief:** Alejandro Velert. **Contributors:** Ulli Glantz and Markus Senn (visual realization), Marc Badertscher, Vinzenz Greiner, Adrian Meyer, Leandra Petersen. **Translators:** Gian Pozzy (French), Claudia Bodmer (English), Ioana Chivoiu, (Romanian) **Proofreaders:** Peter Hofer, Regula Osman, Kurt Schuiki (German), Patrick Morier-Genoud (French), Claudia Bodmer (English), Lucia Gruescu (Romanian). **Layout/Production:** Zuni Halpern (Switzerland) **Image Editing:** Ringier Redaktions Services Zurich. **Print:** Ringier Print Ostrava and SNP Leefung Printers. No portion may be reprinted without the editor's permission. **Circulation:** 10,000 copies. **DOMO** is published in German, French, English and Romanian.



Photos: Yvon Baumann, Stefan Falke, Julie de Tribolet, REUTERS/Christinne Muschi/File Photo

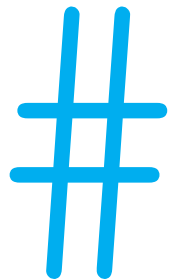


Tell us, Marc Walder...

A new business strategy, plus five leadership principles. Together they set a new course for Ringier. CEO Marc Walder explains the key points.

Texts: Leandra Petersen and Alejandro Velert

62W und 52L: What does that mean?



What do we need a strategy paper for?



The media industry is changing rapidly. Ringier as a company wants to **drive** rather than be driven by change. We have defined guidelines to provide orientation for all of us. They're specific, comprehensible - and applicable. It's not about creating an entirely new strategy but about defining and clarifying a strategy we have already been following.



We are supposed to be a profitable company. Isn't that self-evident?

In ten years, we have invested close to two billion Swiss francs, and we will have to keep investing and transforming. That is only possible if we have the **capital** to back it up. And that is what we need to earn. It is essential that our employees keep this in mind.



The customers should be at the center of our activities. Could you elaborate on this?

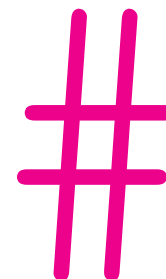
We need to keep asking ourselves: What does what we're doing mean for our users or our readership? How well do our users find their way around? How can we make our customers' lives easier? The **user experience** will determine whether someone likes using your products or opts for an alternative. In the digital world, that is just a click away.



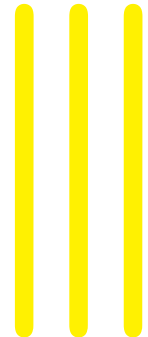
How will you make sure these two initiatives catch on with our staff?

The employees of all our companies need to understand «Six to win» and «Five to lead», and they really need to ask themselves: What does that mean for me, for my sector or department, for my team, for my company? Here's a **specific example** concerning «Six to win». Before the end of 2018, we on the Group Executive Board will want all Ringier companies and businesses to tell us: «What does customer orientation mean to you? How do you measure that? And what are the specific measures you derive from that?» We will conduct a methodical survey to this end. In early 2019, further measures will follow.

Will any editor in Asia care about guidelines from Zurich?



We, the members of the Group Executive Board, are very close to the various companies, in my opinion. We work closely with every country and we all benefit from each other's knowledge and experience. The strategy is a **framework**, not a strategy defined for each and every one of our companies. It is now up to all the Ringier companies to adapt this framework to their own business model and culture.



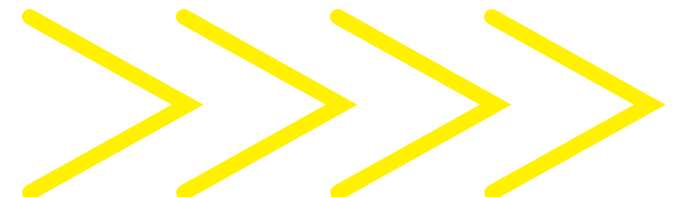
How do we recruit the best talent for Ringier? Other companies dream up all kinds of enticements to score in the job market, from free cafeteria food to ping-pong tables and relaxation rooms.

We want to have the best people working for us and our companies, in Myanmar as well as in Warsaw, Belgrade, Lagos, Accra and Lausanne. We want to be an **attractive and reliable employer** offering our employees prospects, both in terms of business and personal development. That's exactly what we are working at. It's one of our most important challenges.



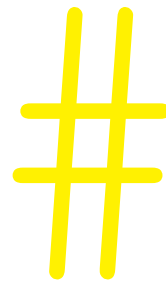
You have also defined five leadership principles. Honestly, which of them could you personally do better at?

All of them. Most of all when it comes to **focus**.



What is Ringier doing right, what will Ringier need to do better?

MW: When it comes to European media companies, we are actually in the top bracket. This is good, but we can't rest on our laurels. What we can do better? Learn something new every day and implement it, both on the small and the large scale. At a management conference some time ago, we put this in a nutshell: **drive change**. After all, change is the one great constant.



How do you want to measure whether people implement and abide by these principles?

MW: Management and employees should ask themselves in the future whether their decisions support corporate strategy: Am I customer-oriented in my behavior? Am I doing my job in a way that is sustainable and of course profitable? Am I bearing in mind the issues concerning **digitalization**? This will be the benchmark by which we will judge our employees in future. It may be stipulated in the target agreement, be incorporated in further training or be practiced as part of our management culture.

How great is the risk that such a paper will simply be shelved and forgotten?

MW: Great. Anything you resolve to do risks being forgotten or de-prioritized. That is equally true of resolutions like «I want to do more for my **health**» as it is of «six to win» and «five to lead».



```
#include <iostream>
using namespace std;

int main()
{
    cout << "Are you a codebreaker?";
    return 0;
}
```

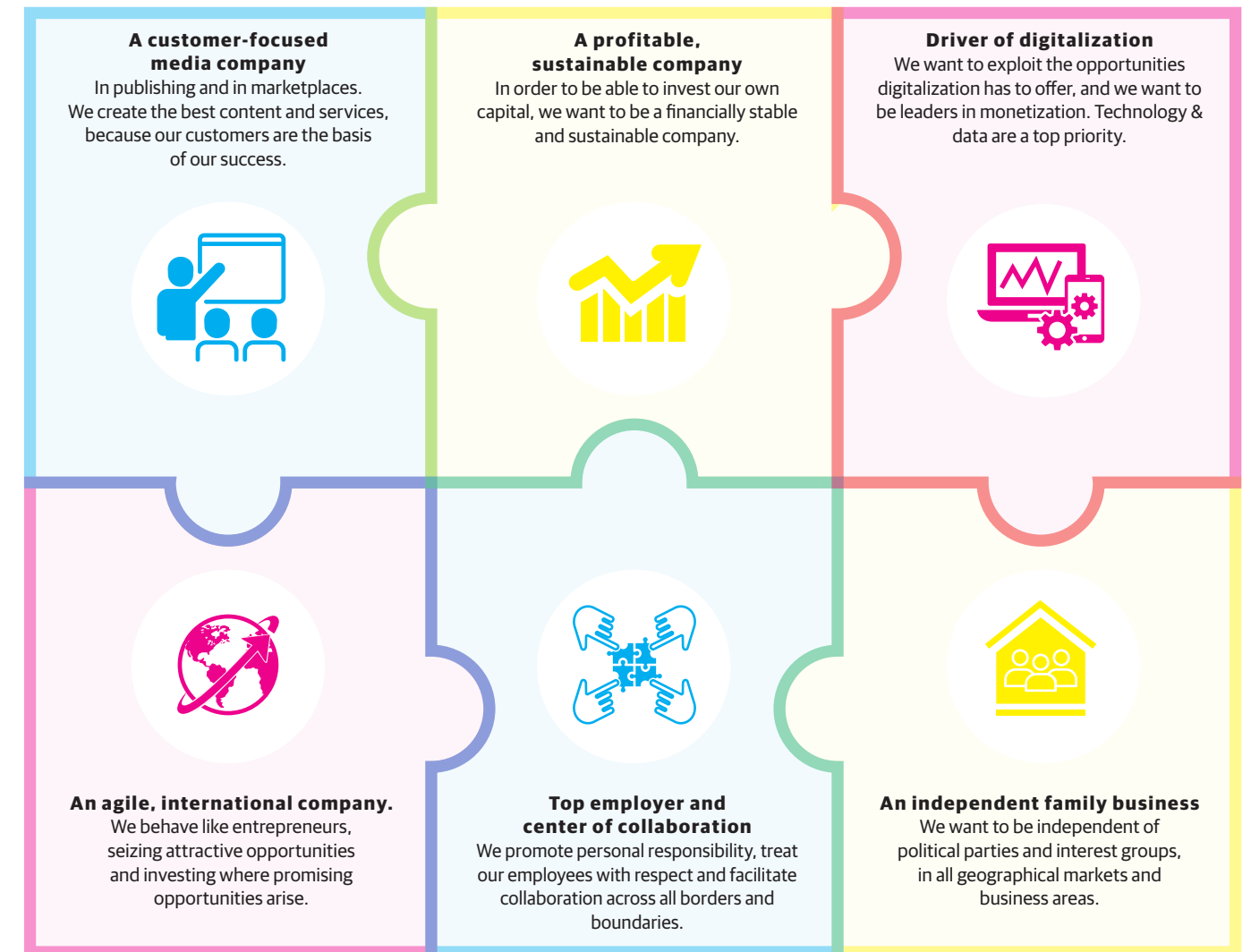
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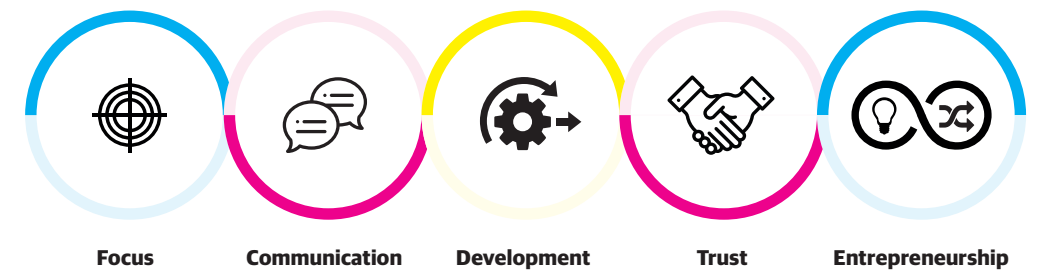
Further information is available on the 62W&52L landing page. Simply scan the QR code to receive further information on the Ringier company strategy and the leadership principles.

The 6 points of the company strategy framework



Five to lead - The leadership principles

The five leadership principles have been worked out by the Group Executive Board in order to establish a consistent understanding of leadership. These principles are important to management and employees alike, because they define a direction and set guidelines. By establishing clear principles, Ringier wants to base its leadership on a solid foundation, creating guidelines as they are required in today's fast-changing world.



Illustrations: FlatIcon



Gold-rush mood: Employees of the mining enterprise Bitfarms check the fans at their data center in Farnham, Canada. This Canadian company allegedly mines 250,000 dollars worth of Coins every day.

Photo: Getty Images

The next big challenge

Bitcoin and cryptocurrencies may be shaking up the financial markets, but Swiss media companies are also taking a close look at blockchain technology

Text: Marc Badertscher

When the value of Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies went through the roof last year, the media jumped on the bandwagon. Every day, readers were swamped with articles addressing the new phenomenon. The media were observers, explainers, critics, but that was it. Media companies themselves were barely affected by this issue.

That is beginning to change. The topic has reached the management level of Switzerland's media companies, taking over meetings and leading to strategy debates. The crucial question is whether these new technologies will lead to changes that require a response.

The focus is not so much on Bitcoin et al. but on new marketplaces for articles, advertising, real estate and classifieds, i.e. the entire range of activities creating revenue for media companies today. A first batch of rough-and-ready marketplaces of this kind is currently being developed outside of media companies. At some point, they might become a problem - for media companies like Ringier, Tamedia and the NZZ Group as well.

But let's go back to the beginning, and indeed to Bitcoin. The whole thing would not have started without this first digital cryptocurrency. Since its beginnings in 2009, people anywhere in the world can send something of value - in this case: Bitcoin - through the Internet without asking anyone for permission. There is no company, authority or bank to control the sending of Bitcoins unilaterally. And yet, it works. So-called blockchain technology prevents the illegal copying of these valuable items (see box).

Bitcoin has triggered a huge surge of innovations. There now are several platforms - e.g. Ethereum - on which items of value can be created and moved. For quite some time this no longer merely involves cryptocurrencies as such but things from the old, known world, e.g. shares, tickets to events or shares in properties. 2019 will see widespread experiments begin to transfer such valuables onto a blockchain. Instead of a company, independent computer software will keep track of who owns what.

Of course, all of these things have been working just fine without ►

blockchain technology, but the problem is efficiency - among other things. The supermarket chain Migros has its own system for managing its Cumulus customer card. Ticketcorner has its own platform, hotels have their own booking systems, not to mention banks. But offline and online worlds are growing increasingly entwined, and the question of how to organize ownership and access to services in the digital realm is more important than ever.

The new blockchain platforms offer a solution. They allow Cumulus customer card points, hotel bookings and shares to be represented as so-called digital tokens. The advantage being that everything is standardized and globalized from day one, the initial hurdles for new projects are low, and tokens may be easily transferred and traded completely automatically without a central control mechanism. This should create new marketplaces. The potential is considerable.

This is why the issue has hit home with corporations in every industry, especially those that are already involved in marketplaces, including the media companies.

At Ringier, the International Digital Team is taking the lead in these matters. Currently, the department is focusing mainly on monitoring the trends and start-ups in this new line of business. At the same time, presentations and videos are deployed to build up in-house expertise that will eventually enable management to make farther-reaching decisions. «Right now, no one knows what the consequences for the media companies will be,» says Emilie Reynaud from the International Digital Team. «But we need to be prepared.» In order to gather experience, Ringier is, for instance, considering adopting the new, still experimental Internet browser Brave, which is designed to deal with cryptocurrencies. The objective is to increase in-house expertise through low-risk endeavors.

The media company Tamedia is also educating its top management about blockchain. Workshops have been conducted for management and others will be slated for the board of directors. In addition, in-house projects for the company's software programers are aimed at exploring these new options at an early stage. Everything is still at an experimental stage, there are no actual applications for users as yet. «Blockchain is certainly being somewhat overhyped at

the moment,» says Samuel Hügli, Head of Technology and Ventures at Tamedia. «All the same, there is a new emerging core technology that concerns all business areas in which values are transferred. Within five or ten years, every industry will have adopted blockchain to some extent.» In the coming months, Tamedia intends to invest in fintech as well as acquiring shares in a few blockchain start-ups.

The NZZ Group is not ignoring this issue either. Andreas Bossecker, Head of Technology, says: «At the NZZ Media Group, we are, of course, studying these matters and examining various options for new projects. For now, however, nothing is definite.»

No one is in a hurry to act, even though start-ups around the globe have been launching initial projects that may affect media companies. In the field of online advertising, Brave

is an experiment that must be taken seriously. The kicker of this new Internet browser from former Mozilla boss Brendan Eich is that users will also profit from the digital advertising and eventually be rewarded for their attention with a small share of the revenue paid out directly to them.

In the field of journalism, Civil, Steemit or Gifto are worth mentioning. They all curate news or op-ed pieces, being hybrids between classic news platforms and social media. As is often the case in the crypto world, economic incentives are part of the deal. Take, for example, the idea of rewarding readers for recommending successful articles or postings at an early stage and thus assuming a curating function. Civil, in turn, is trying to build a system of reputations for reliable journalism. Successful authors are also directly remunerated on this platform.

And then there are the new mar-

Photo on the right:
The first
blockchain
monument in the
world, erected in
the Slovenian
town of Kranj.



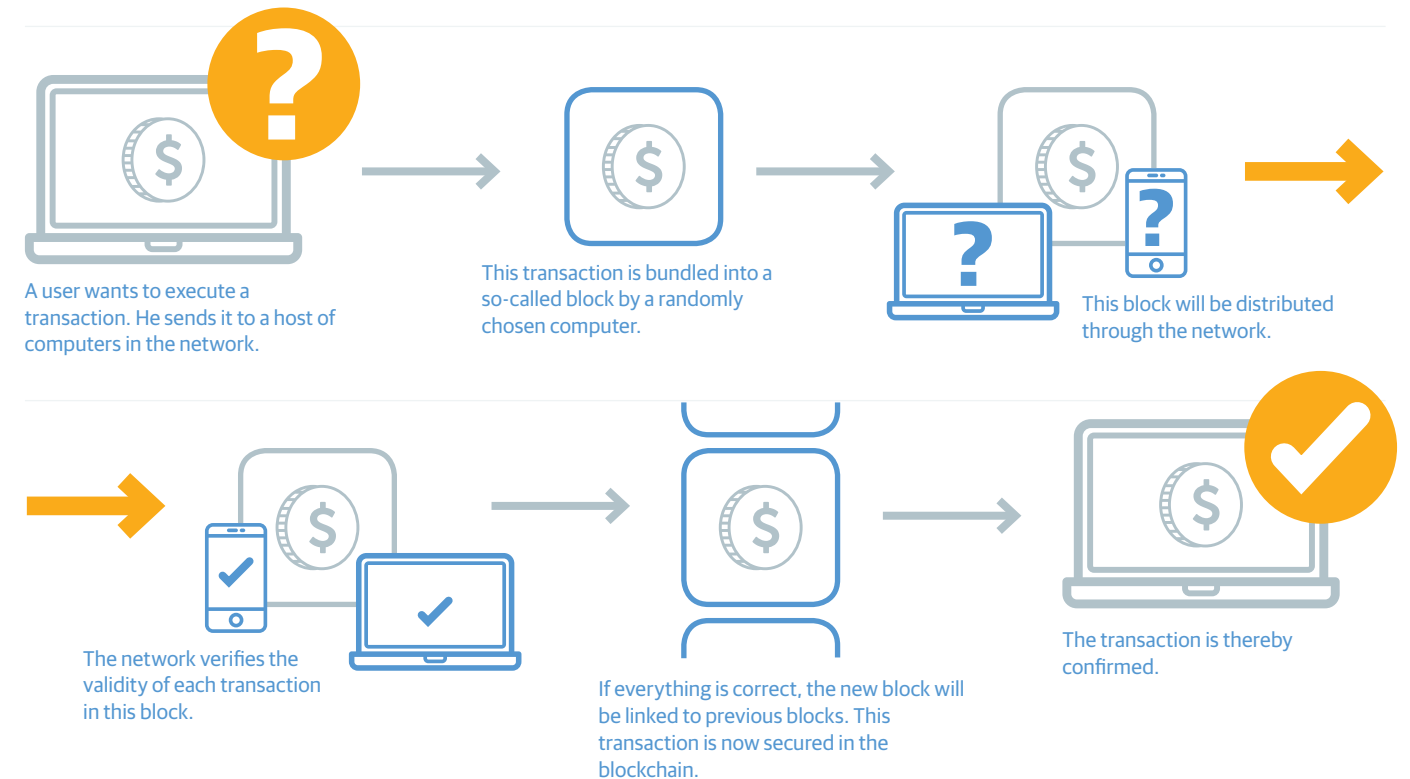
Why blockchains work

A blockchain is basically a database, however, it is not stored on a single computer but on thousands around the world. These computers are in constant contact with each other, so all of them always have the same and the latest data. The question is: How do you make sure the database is only fed with correct and valid data and not, say, with illicit, fraudulent transactions? The solution to this problem is the great achievement of public blockchains, and here's how it works: Every few seconds or minutes, all the participating computers randomly choose one among them to add new transactions to the blockchain. All of them monitor carefully whether the selected computer is abiding by the rules

and adding correct transactions. If it does, it will be financially rewarded. This is an incentive to behave correctly. If the computer (or its owner) wants to cheat anyway, it will simply be skipped, and the network selects the next computer to add to the database. As a result, fraudulent or illicit transactions will not be entered into the database. (This works as long as the majority of the computers are not in collaboration with a crook. This, in turn, is highly unlikely: It would weaken the network and reduce the profit - the reward - of each participant.) At the end of the day, the economic incentives make the participating computers abide by the rules, creating a highly robust system without a central control.

Photo: AFP, Flatiron

How blockchain works



ketplaces. Dozens are currently emerging. Platforms for betting (Augur), marketplaces for physical objects like eBay (OpenBazaar) or for luxury items (TendSwiss), real estate (Atlant) and jobs (Ethlance). They are all using blockchain to at least partly automatize the business that has hitherto been provided by conventional companies.

In concrete terms, this is how it works: Today, an outfit like eBay guarantees that the deals taking place on its sales platform are all correct. Black sheep are weeded out by the company. This is one of the company's *raison d'être*, for which they can charge a small fee per deal. On a blockchain-based platform this kind of monitoring company is no longer needed. Fully automated cash flow guarantees that the deal will go through correctly.

Sellers must make a deposit that they get back once the buyers have received the goods and are happy. At the same time, buyers pre-pay upon ordering, but the transfer is frozen until they have received and approved the goods and release the

funds. Thanks to so-called «smart contracts», this procedure is easy to implement. No intermediary is required. And should the parties involved in the deal have a disagree-

«Right now, no one knows what the consequences for the media companies will be. But we need to be prepared.»

Emilie Reynaud, Ringer International Digital Team

ment, they can call on an arbitrator who will judge the case for a fee. These arbitrators are decentralized agents, independent entrepreneurs who risk losing their reputation if they were seen to be in cahoots with one of the parties involved. In addi-

tion, there are higher authorities one could appeal to.

As a rule, most of these new marketplaces would also work without blockchain technology, but handling cash flow and access rights is likely to become more efficient and trustworthy than they are now. So far, however, there is no project that is ready for use by the general public. This is partly due to the underlying blockchain technology, which is still in the fledgling stage. Most of the blockchains these new applications are based on are too cumbersome, too expensive, still immature and unable to manage large numbers of transactions.

Numerous start-ups and several blockchains will go belly-up, as do many enterprises in the traditional world of business. To write off blockchain technology for this reason would be premature. In the short term, the consequences of new technologies are often overestimated, in the long term, they tend to be underestimated. The next decade will show what this will mean for the media industry 🌐



Peter Hossli at the Serbo-Hungarian border during the refugee crisis of summer 2015. «Out in the field, I am focused and the turmoil around me gives me an inner calm.»

«Emotionally unbearable»

Journalist Peter Hossli presents his first book. «It's a declaration of love to our profession.» In our interview, the long-time Blick contributor reveals why the whining of his colleagues gets on his nerves, his failure with Monica Lewinsky, and where he goes to cry.

Interview Alejandro Velert

Photo: Pascal Mora

Peter Hossli, for a long time you were very secretive about the content of your book. People in the industry were expecting you to drop a bombshell.

I never said it was a secret. I only said I didn't want to talk about it. You'd been planning to do an exposé, right?

No, never. I was aware of the risks involved in this project because the book was going to be personal. The media industry likes to gossip, and I didn't want too many people interfering with it. I wanted to give myself a lot of space.

Now, we learn that, in your entire career, you were only ever happy with one text, the one about photographer Robert Frank. How happy are you with your first book?

That's for others to judge.

You're not getting away that easily. I am rarely completely happy with my texts. That is somewhat exhausting, but it makes for better work. My very first boss at the daily «Tages-Anzeiger» drummed that into me: «If you think you've written something great, odds are it's just mediocre. If you keep struggling and quarreling with it right up to the deadline, it may turn out to be good.» He was right.

You work a lot and are always unhappy? That sounds grueling.

I am not unhappy but self-critical. You're always only as good as your last story. The German journalist Wolf Schneider says: Someone always has to work; either the author or the reader. I try hard to lighten my readers' workload as much as possible.

You've turned out a very personal book.

My first rent went to the Mafia



Peter Hossli's (49) debut is a book about how and why he works as a reporter. At once compelling and very personal, this memoir shines a light on the thin line between professional obsession and private responsibility.

Werd Verlag, 370 pages,
29 Swiss francs
ISBN 978-3-85932-939-3

Which is why the risk of failure is huge. I had to decide whether to write about our craft, the crisis in journalism or an exposé. I concentrated on the craft, only lightly touching on the other two areas. My focus is on how a reporter works, what drives him and what this profession's duty is. I do that using my own history and the stories I have told over the past 25 years.

You describe a good story as a happy pill, something that affects a journalist's brain like a drug. How long have you been addicted?

(Thinks for a long time) When I was six years old, my father's company went bankrupt. We had to move from a big mansion with swimming pool and goats in the garden to a three-room apartment in Nussbaumen, a nondescript village in the canton of Aargau. That was when I first tried to discover why and how things happen. And I realized you can lose everything from one day to the next. Ever since, I have lived with this blend of curiosity and insecurity.

What about the urge to tell stories?

That is innate in every human being. It's as old as mankind. A cave painting depicting local mammoth herds is journalism. And it is an important social duty. Journalists are service providers for democracy. That is crucial to me. We are not the fourth estate. Real power resides with the people and the decision makers.

What is the role of the journalist, then?

As journalists, we have to get as close to the truth as possible and describe and depict it impartially. So others can make the right decisions. There are journalists who want to change the world and operate as activists. To me that is the wrong approach.

What if, as was the case in 2015, refugees on the refugee route through Eastern Europe ask you for help?

The misery and the distress in the Balkans were enormous. Many refugees asked me if I could drive them to Berlin in my car. I know of journalists who did this. I reject that, because it means interfering with reality. Journalists report - we're not people smugglers.

So, you observe rather than help.

My daughters criticize me for that, too (smiles). Photographer Pascal Mora and I filled a double-page spread for «Blick» every day. We revealed what was going on there.

What is to be done about it is up to the decision makers.

In front of the computer instead of out in the field: You maintain that too many journalists stay stuck to their desks at the editorial offices.

It's dangerous to generalize, but all too often, journalists only look at their computer screens and report on what they see there.

Quality journalism is only possible if you go outside?

Oh, I don't like the term «quality journalism». A good piece in a tabloid can be just as good as a long article in the high-quality daily «NZZ». Each text, each picture, each video has to abide by the rules of journalism, no matter where it is published.

«When I was six years old, my father's company went bankrupt. Ever since, I have lived with this blend of curiosity and insecurity.»

Peter Hossli

Speaking of the «NZZ»: In the chapter «Kalt geschrieben, kalt erwischt» (Ripped off, caught off) you describe how, in your early days as a freelance journalist in the US in 1998, you offered the «NZZ» an article you had copied from the «New Yorker».

I regret that to this day. I originally started out at the magazine «Facts», where I learned a great deal. Including the things one should never do: dramatizing stories, ripping off other people's research, using other people's quotes and facts. But that's no excuse.

Did you apologize?

Of course. In the book, I also describe other failures. My interview with Monica Lewinsky, for example. Getting the opportunity to talk to her was a sensation. But the interview per se was feeble. All she wanted to talk about was the handbag company she had founded. I have learned from every mistake.

You also missed the Columbine High School massacre.

I was sitting at Denver Airport, watching what was happening on TV. It was only fifteen miles from where I was! But I misjudged the scope of this tragedy and

boarded my flight. When I arrived in New York, I already had a dozen requests from several editorial offices. In my book, I want to portray journalism as vividly and specifically as possible. Failures are part and parcel of that.

You're saying journalists are spending too much time looking at their computer screen. Were things better in the old days?

No, on the contrary. Journalism is altogether better today. The problem is that the business model is breaking down. This leads to great uncertainty and budget cuts. That's why we are spending more time sitting at our computers. Journalists burn too much energy complaining and they are too preoccupied with the industry's business model.

What's wrong with that?

That's the media managers' job. They are supposed to develop new business models. As journalists, we have to tell stories rather than concerning ourselves with structures.

Are cat videos and funny picture galleries good stories?

If cat videos finance good journalism, I am all for it. We're living in an excellent time for journalism. The world is highly complex, the news wheel is turning incredibly fast. That calls for assessment and explanation. Good stories always work.

What is your advice for young journalists?

Be different. Wherever many journalists gather, you won't find a story. That was my most important lesson as a freelance journalist in New York. The foreign correspondents would study the daily newspapers and report what the Americans wrote to Europe. I soon realized that I wouldn't be able to earn money that way. So, I had to offer different stories.

With success?

It was an excellent business model. The principle of supply and demand applies to journalism, too. If there is a shortage of a commodity - the good story - the price will go up.

Did you grow rich in America?

No, I didn't, but I was able to live comfortably and never was in the red. I paid my first rent to a Mafia family, as undercover agent Joseph Pistone aka Donnie Brasco later explained to me. They owned the New York house where I first lived. **You are known to be meticulous.**

In your work, you get very close to events and people. At the same time, you insist that reporters need to be levelheaded and keep their distance. Isn't that a contradiction?

When I see starving children in Somalia, I push my response to them to the back of my mind. Otherwise it would be emotionally unbearable. The focus is on the story, and I have to write as good an article as possible. A matter of pure craft. Facts and a sober style of writing generally evoke much stronger emotions than a tragic or sad account.

Do you like going to places like that?

I once asked a war correspondent why he travels to war zones. He explained to me that at home, in the American paradise, his inner turmoil was much greater than the outer turmoil, and that made him restless.

And does that go for you, too?

I'm the same. Continually going off on assignment is a rather selfish thing. Out in the field, I am focused and the turmoil around me gives me an inner calm.

And when you go back home?

My sentiments are private. At the editorial office, I don't say a lot, at home, a bit more. Processing what I have seen often takes place in Lake Zurich where I go for a daily swim. And I go walking in the woods. That's where I cry. There's something cathartic about that.

One cannot switch off one's emotions, after all.

No, but your emotions shouldn't control your work. I let them come once the job is done. In Namibia, in 2009, I wrote about a married couple. He was Swiss, she was Namibian. Their two small children had been murdered. Even today, the story still gets to me when I read it.

Do you stay in touch with your protagonists?

Yes, I've remained connected on that personal level with some of them. I exchange weekly emails with a gun nut from Ohio, a Trump voter.

In your book, you keep coming back to managing the balancing act between your family and your job.

A few years ago, I read the excellent autobiography of war photographer Lynsey Addario. She writes about the things she misses because she is always on the move, about the sacrifices she makes. I completely disagree with her there. I am not a victim.



What is the political climate in the USA? What problems are people struggling with? In 2016, Peter Hossli was looking for answers from coal miners in Grundy, Virginia. That is where Trump got the highest approval ratings in the primaries. Hossli soon realized: «Trump has a very high chance of getting elected.»

You are the cause.

Precisely. It's the family that makes sacrifices. I am very close to my two daughters, they mean a great deal to me. But instead of being with them to celebrate their birthdays, I travel around the US with a presidential candidate. That leads to inner strife. It was important to me to describe that. It's part and parcel of a reporter's life. At least my fourteen-year old daughter wants to become a journalist, having read my book. To me, that is the nicest compliment. She recognized the book as being a declaration of love to a profession.

Was it Lynsey Addario's book that inspired you to write your own?

Lynsey's book mattered a lot. But the crucial question came from Ayan Dagan. She was my interpreter on an assignment in Somalia. She asked me: «Why do you write?» I couldn't get her question out of my mind.

In your book you tell that interpreter's story. It gave me the shivers.

Ayan Dagan was circumcised when she was little. As are all girls in Somalia. She was raped and performed an abortion on herself. Why does she tell that sort of thing to me, a stranger from Europe? What does it take for a reporter to earn such trust? That's what I wanted to write a book about.

The cover of your book reads: «What I am: a reporter.» It doesn't say father or life partner.

At home, of course, I am a father

Photos: Stefan Falke, Pascal Mora



and partner. But when it comes down to it, we humans are alone. And then, I'm a reporter. At the end of the day, that's what defines me. **You're also a son. In the book you've outsourced your father as an alcoholic.** My childhood wasn't easy. The way I work has a lot to do with that.

In what way?

My parents going bankrupt made me curious and insecure. Growing up with an alcoholic leaves a mark. It forced me from an early age to become self-sufficient.

Did you have your doubts whether to

write about that or not?

No one goes through life without experiencing unpleasant episodes. My father shaped me. I couldn't leave that out. A reporter gets as close to the truth as possible.

Does your father know he features in the book?

He does.

After eleven years in America you returned to Switzerland in 2009. You describe this moment as an internal disaster. Did you ever really arrive here?

Above: 2009, in Crawford, Texas, where George W. Bush had a ranch. After eight years of Bush, all of the originally ten souvenir shops had folded. Below: Playing tug of war with starving children in Somalia in 2017 - always holding on to his iPad!

Coming back was a rupture for me. I would have loved to stay in New York. But it made sense, if only for the children's schooling.

You were able to work continually for Ringier since then, mostly for «Blick». Not to sound derogatory, but there are more prestigious publications.

Journalists don't work for their reputation but for the readers.

Working for the Blick Group was a privilege. I was able to realize some great stories. After eight years, I was ready for a change.

What is the difference between a writer and a reporter?

«Writer» is too big a word for what I do. What I like about my current job is the rhythm. Every day by 8 a.m., I'm at my office, I write till 5 p.m. and go home. The hamster wheel of the news cycle no longer determines my life. But I am beginning to miss the deadline.

And yet you're already writing your next book. What is it about?

At our Christmas dinner, my father-in-law told me about a murder case that happened when he was young. I was galvanized. Based on this story, I will portray the life and customs in Switzerland during the Cold War.

In your book, you keep railing against the bad tradition of counter-checking that is customary in Switzerland. So, we don't have to let you check this interview?

That's something a journalist should never offer after an interview (laughs). 🌐

Ringier's best photos of the last quarter

The best pictures and their stories: An eggcellent cover. A fountain of youth. High tech going to the dogs. And a pig going to the slaughterhouse.

L'ILLUSTRÉ
EMMANUEL PIERROT
JULIE BODY

Photographer
Editor



How do you illustrate the topic of burnout on a magazine cover? That was the problem facing the makers of **L'illustré** in June. The magazine had already addressed this issue three years ago. Back then, they had photographed those afflicted and printed their image on wrinkled paper. «This time we wanted an even more abstract solution, eschewing personalization,» says art director Julie Body. French photographer Emmanuel Pierrot came up with the perfect idea: a human face, portrayed on an egg. «The cracks and dents in the eggshell symbolize the fragility of a person suffering from burnout. The color is reminiscent of vulnerable human skin,» says Julie Body. The little egg, all alone in empty space, about to break down – that is a clever solution with a touch of humor, and yet full of respect for the problem and the consequences of a burnout, maintains Body.

SCHWEIZER ILLUSTRIERTE
NICOLAS RIGHETTI
NICOLE SPIESS

Photographer
Editor



Photographer Nicolas Righetti doesn't know if the fountains near the «Tours des Carouge» skyscrapers were originally meant to serve as a free public bath. Probably not, but he knows that this is the exact spot he wants to take pictures. In summer, grown-ups and children alike find refreshment here – free of charge, of course. **Schweizer Illustrierte** had commissioned Righetti to capture this summer's heat wave for their story on «Switzerland in the Sweat-box». «It is a magical place. When I was a small boy, I used to bathe here like so many others,» says Righetti. The fountain in Carouge near Geneva is something like the town's unofficial public bath. «There's a special thrill in jumping from one towering fountain to another.» It's not prohibited but there's a certain risk involved, Righetti admits. Around 7 p.m. the light was perfect for shooting these pictures, says the photographer. «That's when the sunshine passes in-between the sky-scrappers.»

L'ILLUSTRÉ
JULIE DE TRIBOLET
JULIE BODY

Photographer
Editor



Even a Shaun the Sheep soft toy fails to cheer up Inuk. This ten-month-old Labrador, whose eyes would melt a heart of stone, suffers from leptospirosis, an infectious disease, and regularly has to undergo dialysis at the small animal clinic in Berne. Photographer Julie de Tribolet and journalist Mireille Monnier spent six days for **L'illustré** magazine at this veterinary hospital for dogs and cats. Editor Julie Body: «We gave them both a lot of time to get a comprehensive picture of what goes on at the animal clinic.» Their report shows impressively to what lengths these veterinarians go. High tech for man's best friends. And since cats and dogs aren't always the best of pals, the clinic has two waiting rooms, one for pooches, one for kitties.

SCHWEIZER ILLUSTRIERTE
KURT REICHENBACH
NICOLE SPIESS

Photographer
Editor



Fortunately, even the most wonderful summer in the mountains yields a bit of shade, otherwise Kurt Reichenbach's photograph for **Schweizer Illustrierte** would never have been shot. He and journalist Manuela Enggist traveled to Engstligenalp, in the Canton of Berne, for two days with the Aellig family. They spend their summers on this high plateau, about 6,500 feet above sea level, together with their cows, calves, pigs and goats. «I soon realized I wanted to photograph the cows using a drone,» says Reichenbach. Unfortunately, he had to upset the cows for this purpose: These animals have a regulated daily rhythm they know very well. However, Reichenbach needed the rising sun to create the perfect shadows. «So, after milking them in the morning, the farmer had to keep the cows in the stable because of me.» After twenty minutes of the cows' plaintive lowing, things happened fast. Reichenbach sent the drone up to an elevation of 120 feet and released the shutter. «Seconds later, the picture would have looked completely different.»

BLICK
STEFAN BOHRER
TOBIAS GYSI

Photographer
Editor



These days it takes a lot to keep people from permanently peering at their smartphones. A column of smoke just about did the trick. On July 27, an almost mile-high pillar of smoke looms in the sky over Basel. Discarded railroad ties have caught fire on a hauling company's grounds. When **Blick** photographer Stefan Bohrer catches sight of the smoke, he gets into his car and drives to Basel's Rhine harbor. «But the police were already cordoning off the streets.» Bohrer finally manages to shoot his photograph from the harbor basin. «It was surprising how relaxed people were watching the whole thing.» The police are not so carefree. Assuming the smoke to be toxic, they appeal to the entire population to stay indoors. When Bohrer tells his editors about the photograph, he is told the paper's column space is entirely full. «When they saw the picture, they made room for almost an entire double-page spread. I'm a tiny bit proud of that,» says Bohrer.

LIBERTATEA
VLAD CHIREA

Photographer & Editor



They're called the «White Men», the men from the Romanian veterinary authority. They check every village, every house, every courtyard, because African swine fever is raging in Romania. By the end of this year, one million pigs will have been slaughtered. «Pigs have a special meaning in Romania,» says Vlad Chirea. «The animals are usually slaughtered for Ignatul. On that day, every movement follows a highly detailed ancient ritual.» The meat is important to Romanians, helping them to make it through winter. On assignment from **Libertatea**, Chirea was photographing the «White Men» at work in the country's south. «The desperate woman in the picture is seventy years old. Her name is Maria. She has lived in Gura Ialomitei her entire life.» She claims her pig weighed 440 lbs. Half a year's worth of food was taken from her. «What makes people angry is that the authorities had been informed by the European Union a long time ago, but they failed to act.»







That's one impressive figure! Forty-five investigative journalists from various newspapers, TV and radio stations jointly investigate the same case sifting through hundreds of thousands of documents, digging through enormous piles of data and conducting interviews. Their goal is to continue the work of Daphne Caruana Galizia, because she no longer can: On October 16th, 2017, a car bomb took the life of this 53-year-old Maltese investigative journalist. Up until her death, Galizia kept reporting on corruption in the island nation.

Six months later, the findings of the 45 journalists are published. Under the heading «The Daphne Project», their 18 media houses in 15 countries follow the leads that Galizia could no longer pursue.

While one participant, the German paper «Süddeutsche Zeitung»

pounces on the multi-billion-euro business of selling Maltese passports, the Swiss daily «Tages-Anzeiger» picks up the scent of the Pilatus Bank on Malta that leads to Switzerland. Other journalists from the conglomerate focus on this bank's ties to the ruling clan of Azerbaijan. The New Zealand radio station follows this trail to an asset manager in Auckland. All in all, more than 80 articles are published as part of the «Daphne Project».

This is not an exceptional case but part of a trend: An increasing number of national and transnational co-operations are developing, with various media companies pooling their resources for big investigations – and successfully so.

In 2016's «Football Leaks», the investigative group European Investigative Collaborators (EIC) led by the German weekly «Spiegel» revealed

how soccer stars dodge taxes. Two years earlier, in the «Luxembourg Leaks», the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) had exposed secret tax deals between the tiny EU member state and multinational conglomerates. The disclosures about the «Panama Papers» and the «Paradise Papers» were also the ICIJ's work. The project «The Migrants' Files», in which journalists from fifteen countries researched how many refugees on their way to Europe not only leave their home countries behind but lose their lives in the process, won the European Press Prize.

Some of these investigations lost politicians their jobs; private accounts were frozen, criminal official investigations were initiated. That is journalism with an impact. «It's great that there is more and more project-related collaboration,» German

media journalist Petra Sorge tells DOMO.

But not everyone can play. DOMO's inquiries about the admission criteria at the association «Forbidden Stories», responsible for the «Daphne Project», and at the ICIJ, remain unanswered. The EIC under the lead of «Spiegel» writes on its website that «only one medium or media outlet from each European country can be an EIC member, ensuring national exclusivity.»

An investigative journalist who has done research in several groups like this, explains to DOMO how this type of collaboration develops. «Based on my own experience, I can say that project-related investigative collaborations come about through personal contacts. You approach colleagues or you are asked to participate,» says Sylke Gruhnwald, who has worked for the Swiss daily «NZZ»,

Swiss Television SRF and is now writing for the Swiss online magazine Republik.

Media journalist Sorge confirms: «It always comes down to good con-

«I have never seen a local newspaper participating in one of these investigative groups. It always comes down to good connections.» Petra Sorge

nections.» Fellow journalists meet at conferences or panels, where they network. It seems to be a very elitist circle. «I have never seen a local newspaper participating in one of

these investigative groups,» Sorge criticizes.

Not only do local newspapers never appear on the member list of any investigative group, neither do certain publishing houses. An investigative journalist writing for a Sunday paper of one of these German-speaking media companies, resignedly says: «We always get left out.»

Nepotism in the business of investigative journalism at the expense of those media that are not allowed to participate?

«Investigative stories are expensive rat races,» says media journalist Sorge. It is a matter of staying ahead in terms of information, preserving exclusivity, often spending months on investigations. Smaller publishing houses should refrain from transregional investigative stories, because they would not be able to keep up ►

with their big competitors. She adds that investigative top stories are a selling point at newsstands, which could put additional pressure on smaller media. Investigative journalism with adverse side effects?

In Switzerland, two current political motions are calling for stricter rules regarding co-operations between the public Swiss Broadcasting Corporation SRG and private media, in order to preserve media diversity. It is now up to the government to take these concerns into account in the forthcoming new Swiss media law.

But the pressure that Sorge mentions is not only felt in Swiss parliament but also on the job market. A freelance reporter working in Germany and Switzerland says: «I sometimes work on the same topics as the big investigative conglomerates. Of course, it's not always easy to prove your mettle in the market, if you're competing with the joint effort of dozens of journalists.»

This issue becomes even more problematic and controversial in terms of media and regulatory policies as many of these investigative groups not only include private media but also public-service broadcasters that are fee-financed.

This is also true of the «Daphne Project». In this group, newspapers like «The New York Times», the Swiss daily «Tages Anzeiger» and the German weekly «Die Zeit» joined forces with public service broadcasters like «Radio France» and Germany's «Norddeutscher Rundfunk» (NDR).

Since 2014, NDR and «Westdeutscher Rundfunk» (WDR) - both

are members of the public-service broadcaster «Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland» (Association of public-service broadcasters in Germany - ARD) -, as well as the «Süddeutsche Zeitung» have been partners in an investigative group. They regularly produce big investigative stories, e.g. about ISIS, the «Paradise Papers» or the «Offshore Leaks», reaping criticism with equal regularity.

After all, the group is an institutionalized co-operation between WDR, NDR, «Süddeutsche Zeitung» and no one else. Head of the group is former «Spiegel» editor-in-chief Georg Mascolo who is paid by all three of the participating media. NDR provides infrastructure for the broadcaster's own employees working for the investigative network.

While these three media companies fail to see any problem in this collaboration, others cry market distortion. Julian Reichelt, editor-in-chief of the German tabloid «Bild», put it in an interview with media magazine «Zapp»: «As a journalist paying TV license fees, I am sponsoring my own print competitors at the newsstand.»

Some people in the industry have dubbed the group a «quotation cartel». Stephan Russ-Mohl, professor of journalism at the Università della Svizzera italiana in Lugano, writes in his book «Die informierte Gesellschaft» (Informed Society), that «one gets the impression that in every other news broadcast, the investigative pool of NDR, WDR and «Süddeutsche Zeitung» is named as the source.» He calls this «free advertising for one of many German quality papers.»

Media journalist Sorge, one of the first people to vociferously criticize this investigative group, wonders why no other private medium apart from the «Süddeutsche» is allowed to participate. «As a viewer and fee payer, I want a maximum of investigation. But at the price of market distortion?» Rules concerning public-private partnerships within the economic system should also apply to journalism, according to Sorge. «Just as if WDR appoints a cleaning company for a long-term cooperation, there needs to be an invitation to tender when a certain amount of money is at stake.»

Due to the ongoing criticism, in 2016, the parliament of WDR's home federal state, North-Rhine West-

Photo: Keystone, Getty Images, AFP, Juliane Werner

phalia, passed the new WDR bill to establish clarity regarding collaborations with third parties. According to Thomas Wierny, expert witness and consultant in media and constitutional law in Bonn, the bill has not achieved that objective. «Decisions on collaborations remain neither transparent nor open to scrutiny.»

Market distortion as sanctioned by the authorities? Replying to our inquiry, the responsible European commission informs DOMO that there have so far been no complaints regarding such collaborations.

Instead of merely receiving questions from the press, however, the commissioners, as well as antitrust lawyers in non-EU countries may soon have to deal with delicate cases regarding this issue. After all, investigative groups are spreading across national borders, including those of Switzerland.

Swiss Radio and Television SRF, for instance, has already been involved in several collaborations - internationally with the «Migrants' Files», domestically for the following investigation into Islamism: In August 2017, an article on the Islamist preacher Abu Ramadan in Biel appeared in the daily newspaper «Tages-Anzeiger». On the evening of the same day, there was an in-depth report on the issue in the SRF current-affairs show «Rundschau». Both parties had been jointly investigating for months and then published in concert.

SRF had already collaborated with «Tages-Anzeiger» on an interactive map of dialects of the German-speaking world. This joint venture also included the leading German news platform «Spiegel Online». Was «Tages-Anzeiger» participating exclusively, thereby benefiting from TV license fees?

In answer to an inquiry from DOMO, the SRF press office gave this explanation: «The fact that investigations in both cases happened in collaboration with «Tages-Anzeiger», was pure coincidence and resulted from the biography of the journalists involved.» In other words: cronyism.

Andreas Meili, a Swiss expert in media law, thinks that investigative collaborations only become problematic when «individual journalists or media are systematically excluded from accessing such material.» He maintains not to have noticed any such restriction of competition.

But what about the foreign media market? Sorge fears that in the long run media diversity might suffer. The fact that private media companies like «Spiegel Online» with its map of dialects or the French daily «Libération» as well as the Austrian daily «Standard» with their «Migrants' Files» get to profit from the resources and work of a Swiss public-service broadcaster does not seem to bother SRF. According to the broadcaster's press office, when it comes to these collaborations it does not matter «whether the parties involved are public or private as it is always a matter of give and take. Public participants also benefit from the private media.»

The collaboration also works the other way: In some cases, private media in Switzerland are already profiting from investigative work done by public broadcasters in other countries, e.g. for «Geheimsache Doping» - an exposé of the far-reach-

ing network of doping and corruption in Russian sports.

This investigation not only involved the Swiss magazine «Republik» and the «Sunday Times» but also Sweden's public TV broadcaster STV and Germany's ARD. To Petra Sorge, it is obvious that «fees for public-service broadcasters are used to cross-subsidize a private medium in another country. A single company is privileged: Why «Republik»? Why not «Tages-Anzeiger» or «Aargauer Zeitung?»

«Republik» journalist Sylke Gruhnwald explains why. She knows the ARD editor responsible for broadcasts on corruption and doping in sports. After she had been asked to collaborate, she contributed research from Switzerland. Gruhnwald maintains that «Republik» is also open to collaborations with other media, but «to me as a journalist the crucial question is: Whom do I trust enough to collaborate and to share the results of my investigations with?»

So, there is nothing to worry about? «Whether there is a problem in terms of regulations in collaborating with public-service broadcasters is worth considering,» agrees Gruhnwald, but she feels that this matter should be settled primarily between the private media and the publicly funded enterprises.

German media-law expert Wierny is clear on this point: «This is effectively a case of indirect cross-subsidization of foreign media with German public-service broadcasting

Several celebrities came under pressure for failing to offer an explanation: the Panama Papers revealed that the Queen of the United Kingdom invests part of her fortune in offshore tax havens. Portuguese soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo shielded his money from the revenue authorities via shell companies. The Malta Files uncovered dubious dealings of the Erdogan clan; Iceland's prime minister Sigmundur Gunnlaugsson even had to step down because of the disclosures. And we learned that Gianni Infantino signed contracts with shell companies while he was head of UEFA's legal department.



«Individual journalists or media are systematically excluded from accessing such material.»

Andreas Meili, expert in media law

fees.» However, this might be «a necessary evil in some circumstances», if these investigations yield results that are of interest to the German fee payers. Wierny: «At the end of the day, it is a matter of weighing interests.»

One might also say: It is a matter of what price you are willing to pay for big investigations. 🌐

The hype is over

For the first time in the company's history, Facebook is registering declining user figures. More and more people appear to be feeling uneasy about the social network. The company has reached a crossroads.

Text Adrian Meyer

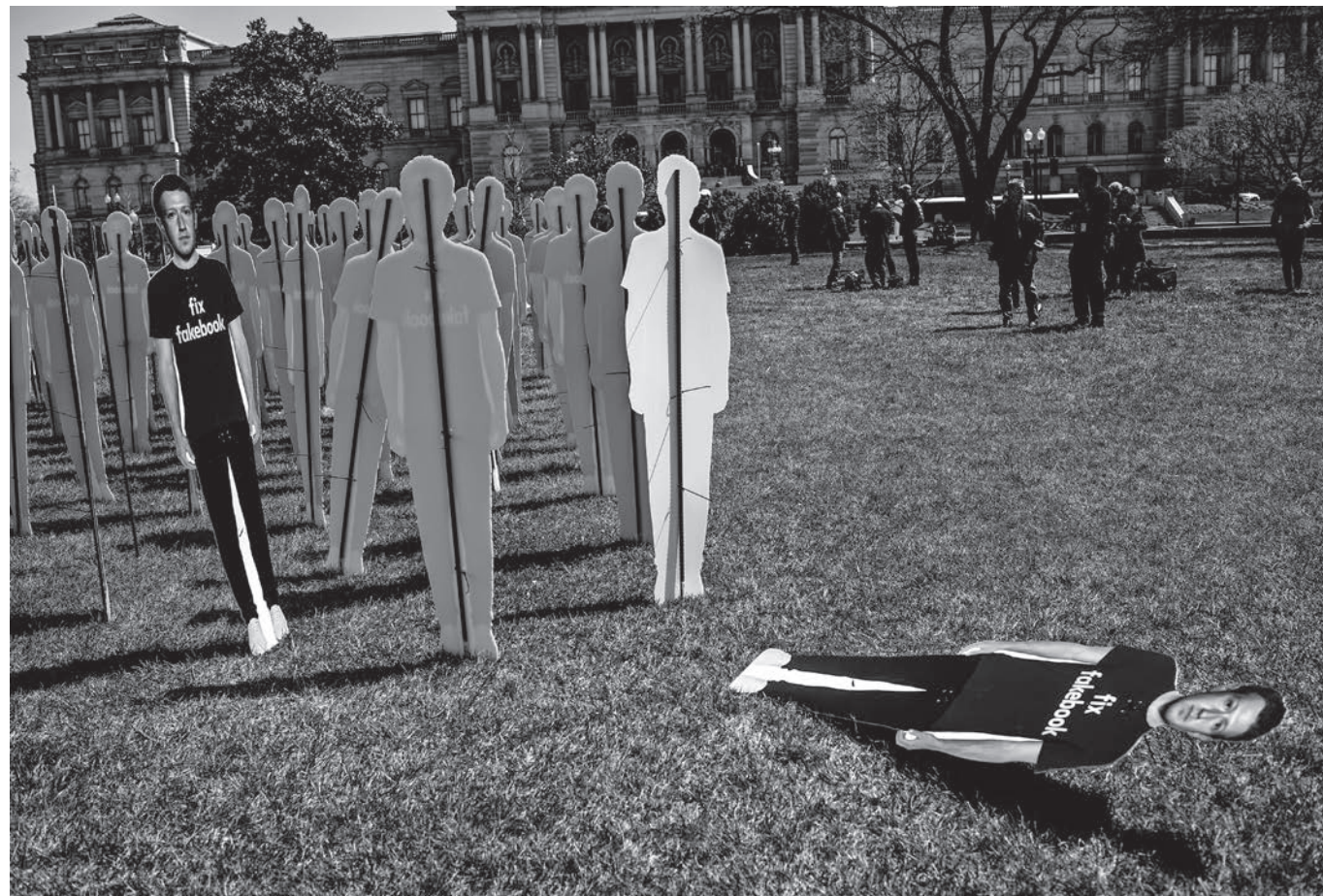


Photo: Stephen Voss/Redux/Laif, AFP

The lines currently appearing in TV ads, print advertisements and on posters throughout German-speaking Europe are stunning: «f stands for our faults, f stands for failed trust, f stands for frustration - about our inability always to live up to our responsibility. We want to apologize for that.» Facebook, the biggest social network, has been deploying statements like these as part of a broadly based image campaign to regain the trust of its users. The big blue data hog is eating crow in a major way - and promising a «more advanced, better Facebook.»

They must really have taken a beating. At least their accounts have - to the tune of 150 billion dollars.

That is how much Facebook burned in a single day, on July 25th. The share lost a quarter of its value. It is the biggest price drop in stock-market history and the sign of the break of an economic trend.

For the first time ever, Facebook has reported flatlining user figures. In Europe, they are even declining: Three million active users are kissing the social network goodbye - each day. Young users in particular no longer feel like signing up. Facebook's growth has reached a limit - and the end of its fabulous yield.

And yet, rapid growth regardless of the consequences had always been the basis of the business model CEO Mark Zuckerberg (34) believed in. And for a long time, it paid off. Within 15 years, Facebook rose from an online facebook for Harvard students to the world's biggest social network numbering some 2.2 billion users.

In the six years since the company went public in 2012, Facebook has grown by a billion users and increased its turnover from 5 to 40 billion dollars. Meanwhile, the share price rose from 38 dollars to a peak of 210 dollars in mid-July, just before the crash. At that time, Facebook's market capitalization was 630 billion dollars. Those are awesome figures.

The users' data is the oil that keeps the social network's engine running. Accumulating as much data as possible about the greatest possible number of users in order to deploy targeted advertising, that is the core of Facebook's business. Protecting that data is of less concern.

This cavalier attitude towards users' privacy blew up in Facebook's face last spring. In March, it transpired that the British data analysis

outfit Cambridge Analytica used the personal information contained in some 87 million Facebook users' profiles without their approval to influence public opinion in both the US presidential elections and Britain's Brexit referendum with unauthorized political advertising. Facebook had been aware of the data abuse since 2015 but failed to inform its users.

These disclosures lost Facebook 50 billion dollars at the stock exchange. Mark Zuckerberg himself had to testify before the House of Representatives; he appeared remorseful, apologized and vowed to improve data protection.

At first, it seemed that the scandal would not have a major effect on Facebook's business: The share price quickly bounced back and climbed to record heights.

But then it turned out that Facebook had lost the trust of its users in a major and lasting way. A storm had been brewing in the background. Brandishing the slogan #deletefacebook, huge numbers of people call for a boycott of the social network. Celebrities like Tesla founder Elon Musk, the singer Cher and Apple founder Steve Wozniak delete their profiles.

Millions of other users joined them because they were fed up with the data hog's behavior. The storm finally broke with a thunderclap in July, when Facebook announced its quarterly figures - and the stock crashed.

Users' disenchantment with Facebook had actually been obvious for a long time. Scarcely anyone wrote anything personal anymore, and the Timeline only featured the same old self-promoters. Most friends remained silent or invisible. There was a whiff of death about the network.

Facebook's reputation suffered for other reasons as well: filter bubbles and fake news, dictatorships using the network for propaganda, foreign regimes twisting it to influence elections. Instead of people networking for positive purposes they began to spread hate speech and incite aggression towards minorities.

Up until that point, Mark Zuckerberg had fudged his way through claiming that Facebook was just a platform without any responsibility for its content. That was how he maintained high growth rates - regardless of the consequences.



Uphill battle: Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg. In Europe, the social network is losing three million active users each day. The company's cavalier attitude towards users' data has taken its toll.

However, since the data abuse scandal, the pressure for Facebook to finally take the needs of its users seriously has been mounting. Even Zuckerberg, who had always been a moral opportunist, appears to be changing his mind. He is promising to invest in data security and prevent manipulation. He now intends to take measures against hate speech and fake news.

In addition, the focus should once again be on the users: more photos of friends, less news, more cat pictures, fewer videos. Basically, taking a step back to its roots.

This will also have an effect on publishing houses. Facebook had become their most important partner for increasing the reach of their digital content. Even in 2017, changes to the newsfeed algorithm had led to declining user figures for the publishers. Now 2018 may well be the year they begin to slip out of the stranglehold the mighty platform has acquired on them - and say goodbye to clickbait.

Mark Zuckerberg had already promised to «fix Facebook» at the beginning of this year - before the data abuse scandal. So far, not much has happened. That kind of makeover would cost a lot of money. Zuckerberg vowed to invest up to 60 percent more into data security, marketing and content. That does not make investors happy.

Facebook is at a crossroads. If the network cleans up its act it will have to give up its policy of rapid growth - and the associated fabulous yield. If it keeps going as before users will continue to desert it in droves. The question is: Will Mark Zuckerberg make good on his promises this time? 🌐

Awards, Apparel and other Attractions

In Washington, Ringier wins the «Global Media Award», and in Africa, our company is also reaping all kinds of accolades. In December, so will our staff: at the Ringier Schweiz Awards. The appropriate attire is available from our new shop.



Prizes aplenty in Africa

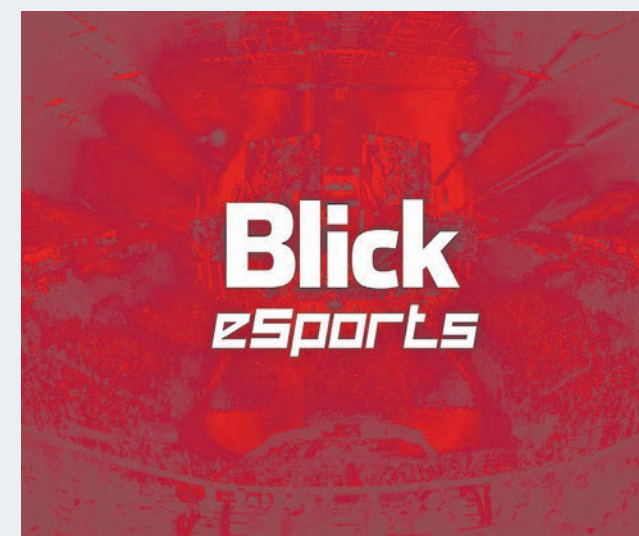
In Africa, Ringier is going from strength to strength – and winning plenty of prizes: In July, Pulse Nigeria won the award for «Best Online Media Website» at the .NG Awards. At the Social Media Week in Nairobi, Brighter Monday Kenya was given the «Award for Best Blog». Meanwhile, Ringier Kenya nabbed the Digital Media Award 2018 for «Most Innovative in Digital Publishing». And Leonard Stiegeler, General Manager at Ringier Africa, even made it into Forbes Africa: In the Technology category, he was one of the executives profiled in «30 under 30».



**Ringier
Schweiz
Awards
2018**

The first edition was a great success, and so the Ringier Schweiz Awards will return this year.

Nominations may be submitted on www.ringierschweizawards.ch as of now. At the awards ceremony, which will take place at the Xmas Party in Zurich in December, individual employees, teams or entire departments may be honored with awards, in one of the following categories: The Moneymaker, The Storyteller, The Changemaker, The Innovator, The Teamworker, The Colleague.



Game on

The eSports fan base is growing apace. That is why the Blick Group is expanding the eSports division to provide more support for the scene in Switzerland, Germany and Austria as well as supply it with pertinent content. Says Roger Hämmerli, Head of Social Media at Blick Group: «We're seeing huge growth potential for our media brands in this field. We're banking on a content mix including live streams, video content, reports, interview and personal stories on famous gamers.»



From zero to first place

First participation, first award. Last June, the International News Media Association bestowed a «Global Media Award» on Ringier at its World Congress in Washington. The project «Using Advanced Artificial Intelligence to Boost Digital Reader Engagement» won in the category «Best idea to grow digital readership or engagement». Xiaoqun Clever, Chief Technology and Data Officer of Ringier AG: «This award makes us very proud. I would never have dreamed that we, with our tiny team which has been working on this for less than two years, would be able to prove ourselves in the highly competitive environment of this award.»



Merchandising-Shop

Buy cool gear in line with Ringier's new corporate strategy! Further information about our new shop is available on the 62W&52L landing page. Simply scan the QR code.

Price list:
Hoodie: 49.95 CHF and up
Bottle: 18.00 CHF
Notebook: 7.00 CHF
Ballpoint pen: 4.00 CHF and up
T-shirt: 20.00 CHF





Michael Ringier, Publisher

Once upon a time, Ringier began as a start-up, but even the most sympathetic historical narrative would not be able to detect any hint of a scalable model or industrial dynamics during the first two generations. When my grandfather, at the tender age of twenty-two, had to take over the already 65-year-old company after his father's untimely death in 1898, it numbered fewer than a dozen employees. By the time of his death in 1960, the company was Switzerland's biggest private publishing house, with more than 2,000 employees.

Karl Lüönd, author of the historical account «Ringier bei den Leuten» (Ringier with the people), - published for the company's 175th anniversary - describes August Ringier as an imperious, grouchy factory owner and domestic tyrant. My own memories of him are somewhat more charitable, but he was certainly formidable. Still, he was not just the innovative pioneer who single-handedly developed intaglio printing presses and founded numerous new magazines; he was also an old school boss with a sense of social responsibility. Dismissals were an

Money instead of character

absolute exception, and to this day, the Humanitas foundation annually donates a handsome sum to people in financial distress. My grandfather founded this trust to financially support Ringier employees suffering hardships. In an era without a public support system in place, this was a clear acknowledgement of entrepreneurial responsibility.

The difference between Zofingen's Wigger Valley and California's Silicon Valley is vast. Human dumbbells and hyperventilating smart alecks are probably the rule, rather than the exception, in their founding generation. Were there an open-ended Richter scale for egomania, the biggest earthquake would pale in significance. Elon Musk, Tesla's father figure, undermines his management with impossible announcements and suggests that a father of five is a homosexual, simply because the British diver pronounced Musk's mini-submarine completely unsuitable for the rescue of those Thai children trapped in the cave.

It took a court order for Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, to acknowledge his eldest daughter, two years after she was born, and he paid a monthly child support of 385 dollars, which was later upped to 500 dollars. As she wrote in her newly published biography, when she left at the end of one of her last visits with him he allegedly shouted after her: «You smell like a toilet!» Hardly the stuff of fatherly love.

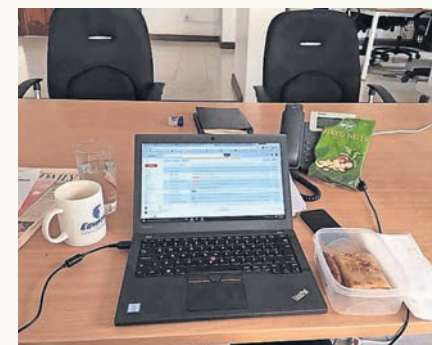
Travis Kalanick, the eccentric founder of Uber, was forced by investors to step down as CEO in 2017. Accusations of aggressive leadership, theft of company secrets, an investigation concerning fraud and an alleged breach of fiduciary duty as well as allegations of sexual harassment and bullying in everyday operations proved too much for investors fearing for the brand's reputation. What also didn't help was what the Uber co-founder said during a filmed conversation with one of his drivers, who complained to his passenger Kalanick for increasing his demands on drivers while simultaneously lowering fares: «Some people don't like to take responsibility for their own shit. They blame everything in their lives on somebody else,» was his reply, which quickly went viral on the Internet and was not well received. Neither was Kalanick's rating of the driver with one out of five possible stars.

The list of Silicon Valley narcissistic technocrats could be continued endlessly. They all have one thing in common. They are at war with the media, because they perceive criticism as a personal insult. The conclusion, money and power don't change a person's character - they reveal it.

Michael Ringier

Photo: Maurice Haas

Leonie von Elverfeldt, 34.
Managing Director
Ringier Africa Digital Publishing,
Nairobi, Kenya.



MONDAY

I launch into the new week. It begins with a cup of coffee and some unleavened bread - chapatis are irresistible! I check the last seven days' statistics, including page views, reach and impressions, and prepare for the week to come.



TUESDAY

At 10.00 a.m. I take an Uber to my meeting. Our office driver Alex is on the road with the video team for a live vox pop. In Nairobi, you should always allow for a buffer of thirty minutes as traffic can be a nightmare. In Karen, a suburb of Nairobi, I visit Unilever to introduce our RADP services.



FRIDAY

Once a month, on a Friday, we throw a big drinks party. Friends and customers are welcome to join us. Today, the RADP team are also offering cake and drinks to celebrate our winning the «Most Innovative Digital Publisher» award.



WEDNESDAY

My 6.30 a.m. workout motivates me and makes me happy. Not so much when the alarm goes off, but afterwards. I work out with a personal trainer, my room-mates and home-made weights. I live with three friends in a small house with a garden, just ten minutes away from the office.



THURSDAY

First publishers' summit. Each publishing house gets to introduce their target groups and their unique selling point in a five-minute presentation. I take this opportunity to convince agencies and customers of the quality of our products «Pulse Live» and «Business Insider».

WEEKEND

Kenya is the most beautiful country! Only two hours away from Nairobi, you get to see spectacular views and wildlife. I spend the weekend camping with friends. We go on a hike and have a picnic. On Sunday, we drive back to Nairobi around 3 p.m. Otherwise we might risk our lives in the dark with oncoming old trucks and all those crazy Matatus - Kenya's means of public transport.



Sir Dracula can sing, too

Professional journalists should always keep their distance from their subjects, and there is one thing they ought to avoid at all costs: becoming fans of the interviewee. That is rather difficult when you're sitting across from British actor Christopher Lee. Text: Alejandro Velert

We are waiting for the Prince of Darkness. The man whose voice sets Middle-earth a-trembling. The man about whom the «Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung» once wrote: «If evil has a face it must closely resemble his.» We are waiting for Christopher Lee.

We, that is six journalists from different countries in a conference room at the Hotel Eden Roc in Ascona, Switzerland. Twenty-minute round-table conversations like this are hardly the stuff journalists' dreams are made of.

However, the following meeting is to become a memorable occasion for everyone attending, for Christopher Lee is not only a titan of cinema (which is what Britain's former Prime Minister David Cameron called him). Lee is a force of nature, a cultural fireworks in human form.

When the tall actor, who is almost six foot five, enters the conference room leaning on his walking stick, he does not look at all like a Prince of Darkness but more like a kindly grandfather. The impression changes, however, when he greets the journalists in his booming bass voice: «Good morning, everybody!» he thunders. We really feel as if we were at the movies. Was that the evil sorcerer Saruman who just ordered the devastation of Middle-earth?

Christopher Lee is in town to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Locarno Film Festival. Asked about his age, which is 91 at the time of the interview, he quips: «I'd rather decay physically than mentally.» Just how fit his mind is becomes

evident in the subsequent minutes.

Basically, this man has nothing left to prove. A former intelligence officer and highly decorated war hero, Lee is a living legend. Famous for his portrayals of the blood-sucking Count Dracula. Revered as the suave and steely villain in the Bond movie «The Man with the Golden Gun». Thrilling as Saruman in the «Lord of the Rings» trilogy.

But, as I said, the old man does not really appear to be all that evil. Before we journalists start to pester him with questions, he asks, quite the English gentleman, where we all come from. And that's when the show begins:

The first colleague says he's from Berlin. So, Lee greets him in German so refined it makes the journalist's head spin. How come Lee speaks perfect German, the Berliner wants to know. «My German isn't perfect, it's just accent-free. There's a difference,» Lee replies. So, it hardly comes as a surprise that he goes on to address my colleague from Romandy in equally accent-free French - He spent part of his childhood in French-speaking Switzerland, Lee explains. And that was where he had his first big appearance on the stage: «That was ... Rumpel... Rumpelstilzchen!» Five years old he was at the time, and he crapped his pants before going on! Lee laughs and the earth quakes.

The next journalist says he's from Moscow. Whereupon Lee loudly launches into a Russian song (he is a trained opera singer) and cheerfully goes on to chat in Russian.

While most of us are rubbing our eyes in wonder, the next colleague says he is from Barcelona. And Lee answers ... no, not in Spanish, which he could certainly do. Lee speaks Catalan! Rumor has it that Lee has also mastered three Urdu dialects and can pass for a local in Pakistan. It must be true but we don't have time to double-check.

For, the British actor has begun to talk about his love for his wife, to whom he has been married for more than 50 years. And about his other great love, music. Lee has just recorded two Heavy Metal albums that made it into the charts. At 91 years, this is another world record. He published the albums under the pseudonym Charlemagne, referring to the great king and emperor of the 8th and 9th century. With good reason, as Lee's lineage on his mother's side can be traced back all the way to the age of Charlemagne.

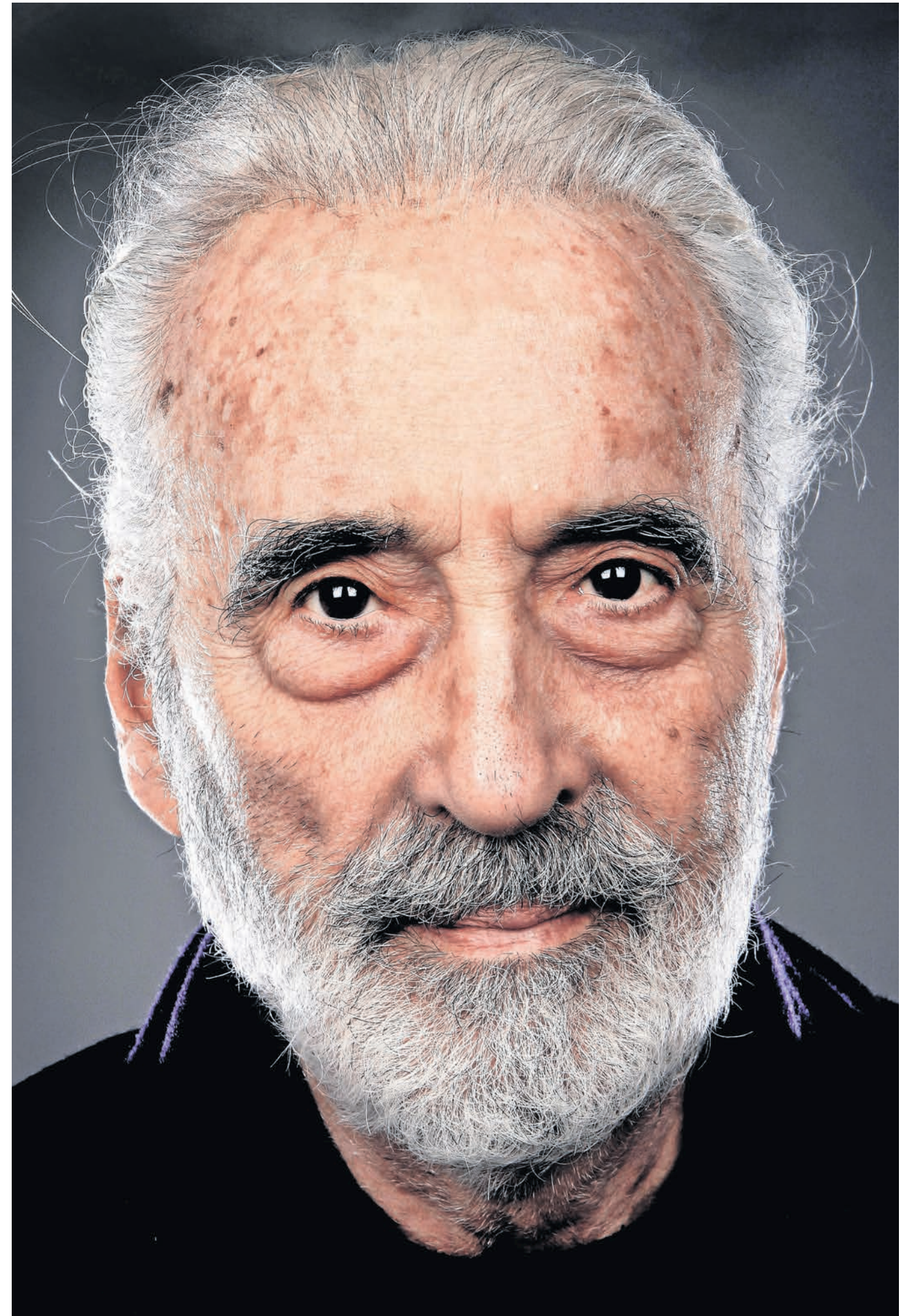
And since Lee is obviously happy with our gathering, his mood upbeat and his voice in fine fettle, he goes on to launch into a Verdi opera. Shortly thereafter, he makes his distinguished farewells, leaving behind a speechless gaggle of journalists.

Nowadays, one would probably dub Christopher Lee a multi-talent or a multi-tasker. A more fitting epithet would be: highly sophisticated. A personality the likes of which the Internet generation is unlikely to produce.

Christopher Lee died in London on June 7, 2015, just after his 93rd birthday. 🌐

He set the world record for the highest number of screen credits for a living actor: British thespian Christopher Lee.

Photo: Getty Images



The Just-do-it Girl

The trade she once learned no longer exists. No problem for Priska Wallimann. «Change is what makes life exciting,» she says. She invests her creativity into infographics for the Blick Group, creating award-winning works.

Photos and Illustration: Priska Wallimann

Every few months, Priska Wallimann will walk through the Pressehaus at night, whenever Ringier's art department has hung new paintings in the building. Her favorite is the big South Pole picture by Andreas Gursky at the front desk. «If I had a big wall at home, I would make Mr. Ringier an offer,» she says with a laugh. Instead, she painted a smaller interpretation of her own at home.

Priska loves art. She invests her creativity into her work. Her job is doing infographics for the Blick Group. She calls herself a visual journalist. «I tell stories, just by means of graphics.» She says she sometimes does several weeks of research to prepare for her work, some of it in her spare time, making hand-drawn sketches, writing texts. «Even the tiniest detail has to be right.» Just how good she is at her job has recently come to the attention of the Society for News Design in the USA. Her infographic «Die Wahrheit über weisse Weihnachten» (The truth about white Christmas) won Priska an Excellence Award, a sort of Pulitzer Prize for infographics.

Priska calls herself a Nike girl: «Just do it» is her motto. «And because Ringier is a just-do-it company, I have loved working here for the past twenty years.» A trained photolithographer, she began her career in digital image processing for magazines; a few years later, she was teaching employees in the Eastern European Ringier countries to use Photoshop. Priska subsequently collaborated on various re-designs in Switzerland and abroad. «It was always learning by doing.» The changes in the business and the new technologies are thrilling to the 46-year old. «Nothing is worse than standing still.»

Until a year ago, Priska spent most of her spare time with her horse. Then «Vini» had to be put down. Now, drawing and painting are the most important things in her life. Priska has just spent a month in Paris, at the École des Beaux-Arts. «Apart from one or two visits to museums, I was drawing nonstop and enjoying life. And I'm taking all of those inspirations with me to the office.» AV



Self portrait by Priska Wallimann, a monochromatic ink watercolor (above). Her last vacation was spent almost entirely at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. A special privilege: her class was working at the historic chapel (below left). A 360-degree photograph of her horse «Vini», who had to be put down a year ago (below right).



Editor's Choice

by Marc Walder

Ringier CEO Marc Walder tells you what he is reading and why it fascinates him.

Max Tegmark

LIFE 3.0: BEING HUMAN IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



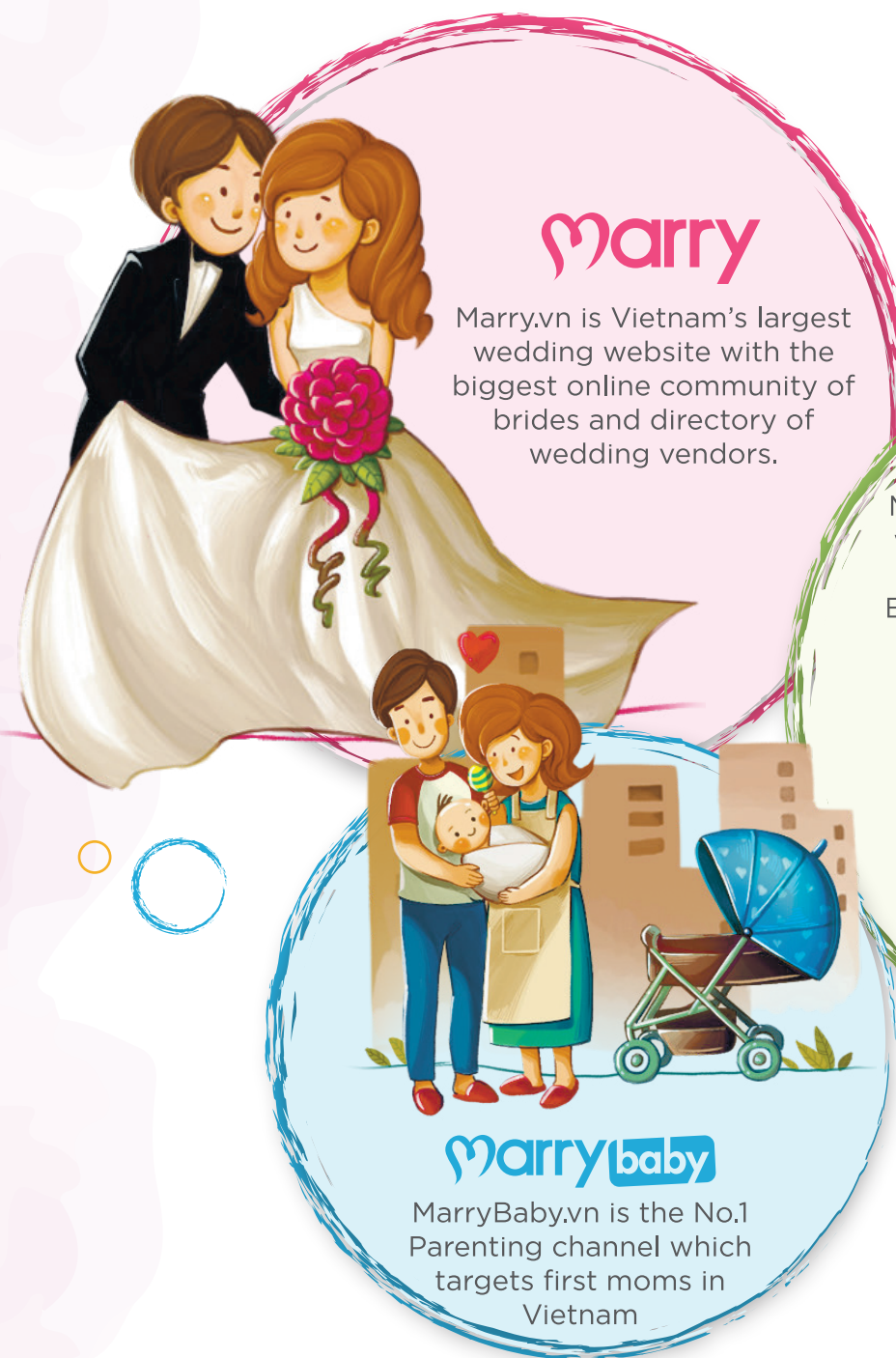
Inexorably, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is taking over more and more parts of our lives. While some dream of a prosperous future for humanity, others fear AI could lead to disaster. In his very wise book, renowned MIT physicist Max Tegmark addresses possible scenarios. Some are exciting, others disturbing. From phenomenal progress and highly developed technologies to humanity's self-destruction, anything is possible. But Tegmark is optimistic: «We can create an inspiring future if we win the race between AI's growing power and our growing wisdom of how to manage it,» he maintains. A book that gazes into the future and sometimes reads like a thriller. Publisher: Knopf

International Institute for Management Development

WORLD DIGITAL COMPETITIVENESS YEARBOOK



How is Switzerland doing in terms of digital fitness? Rather well, according to the «World Digital Competitiveness Yearbook» of the Lausanne IMD Business School, which has fortunately become a member of «digitalswitzerland». The IMD survey shows that Switzerland has improved its international ranking from 8th to 5th place. The survey's authors credit Switzerland with great adaptability and agility. But there is a lot of room for improvement: When it comes to schools and e-government, Switzerland lags behind. This readable and instructive survey can be downloaded from www.imd.org.



Marry.vn is Vietnam's largest wedding website with the biggest online community of brides and directory of wedding vendors.

Marry living

MarryLiving.vn is the first personalized website which targets moms had kids from 6-12 in Vietnam; also includes BepGiaDinh.com - The leading cooking channel for kitchenistas.

Marry baby

MarryBaby.vn is the No.1 Parenting channel which targets first moms in Vietnam

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VIETNAMESE WOMEN'S LIFETIME
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