

IS terrorists and their war propaganda :  
atrocities served up with pop culture

DOMO

Ringier

In-house journal  
December 2014

Thomas Trüb  
Class of  
1974/76

CEO Marc  
Walder  
looks  
forward  
to  
2015

Marc  
Walder  
Class of  
1993/94

Michael  
Ringier  
Class of  
1974/76



40 years of the Ringier School of Journalism

In a class by itself



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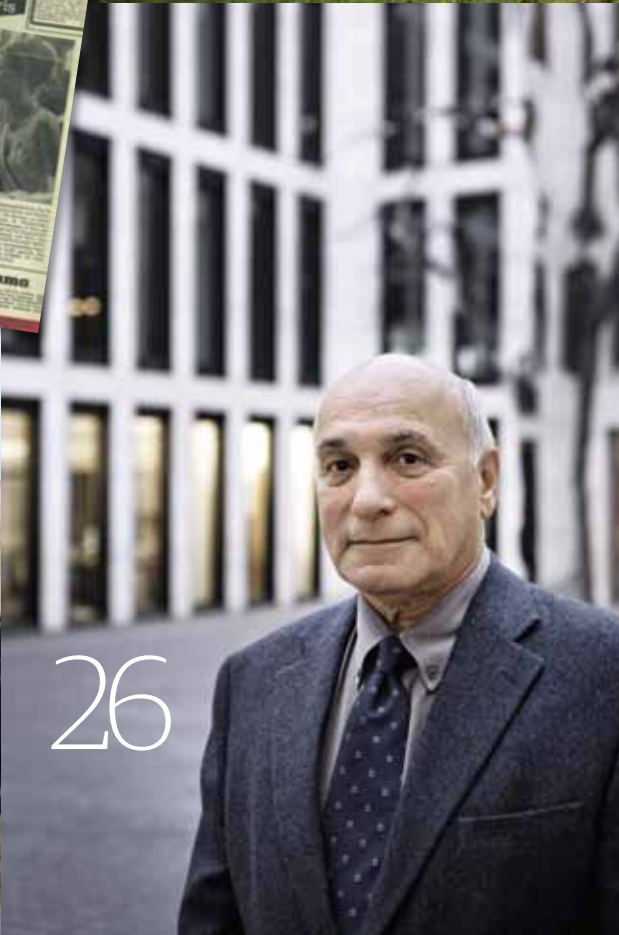
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## 40 years of commitment to quality in Swiss journalism

In 1974, publisher Hans Ringier founded Switzerland's first **School of Journalism**. This pioneering act called for a special location for the school, so the publisher put his family home at the disposal of the new institution. In the years since, 335 journalists have received their training at the «Villa Römerhalde».

Text: Hannes Britschgi. Photos: Charly Hug/hugphotos.com; Keystone; RDB.





At first there was just a soft hum and a vibration. But soon, there was an enormous rustling of leaves in the trees. «Playmate of the Year» Yolanda Tavoli-Egger was being flown in by helicopter. The huge park surrounding the Ringier villa suddenly seemed dangerously small. The most beautiful girl at Römerhalde blew the pilot a goodbye kiss. Today, she laughs about her spectacular entrance. «I had a very rich boyfriend at the time. As I didn't want to be late for my first day of school, he flew me there in his helicopter. I was a bit wild and crazy then.»

This was probably not what Hans Ringier had in mind when he hesitated - because he did struggle with himself. For quite some time the boss had been considering founding a school for journalists. It was a must, of that he was convinced. He also knew where he wanted to locate it. An institution like that required appropriate surroundings, a dignified place of residence. After all, in the 1970's - by Swiss standards, the training of fledgling journalists was a pioneering endeavor. Hans Ringier was on the verge of deciding to make his family home - the villa Römerhalde - available for this purpose.

His own parents' house? Really? The house he grew up in? It felt almost too private to him.

Eventually, however, he overcame his reservations and offered the new educational institution his childhood home. At the school's opening in 1974, Hans Ringier greeted his guests with these words: «I must confess that at first it was not with a light heart that I opened the doors of this house, which to me has always been something like a happy refuge from the hectic world of business.»

The opening party guests were touched, and for the past forty years, students, teachers and school administration have been grateful to school

founder Hans Ringier for having bestowed his family home upon them. The Villa Römerhalde is a quiet place - perfect for the highly concentrated transfer of theoretical and practical knowledge, for the acquisition and processing of the skills that journalists simply must have if they want continued professional success.

The classroom furnishings - the family's former living room, with a fireplace - were the only things to have changed somewhat, after many years. It now boasts Wi-Fi, a video projector, a sound system, a video screen and remote-controlled lights and blinds.

The brain behind the notion of a Ringier school for journalists was Heinrich Oswald, the publishing house's then Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer. At the first graduation ceremony he recalled the main purpose of his school: «At this school and through this school we want to make clear that journalism is not a profession you choose out by chance or by default, as people sometimes wrongly assume. Our program and curriculum mean to make you see that journalism is in fact an extremely demanding profession, whose rules and instruments journalists are no more intuitively aware of than a physician is of the workings of anatomy or an engineer is of structural calculations. Whenever great things are achieved, they are usually born of an interaction between teaching and learning, and the result of diligence and self-discipline.»

At the time, not everyone was enthusiastic about the Ringier publishing house educational initiative. While the professional organizations had pored over similar projects for years they suddenly found themselves faced with a fait accompli and they were peeved. Some even feared that the school would be a den of tabloid



When the school was founded, he was acting Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of the Ringier publishing house: Heinrich Oswald.

journalism. Founders Ringier and Oswald however, had other ideas. They wanted the Ringier School of Journalism to be of service to Swiss media.

Its objectives as stated in the charter of the «Hans Ringier Foundation» are: «The promotion and development of Swiss journalism, particularly by means of theoretical and practical instruction, training and further education of journalists. Professionalism, ethics, craftsmanship and responsibility must take first priority.»

The first training course, from 1974-76, was comprised of 21 young journalists; eight women and thirteen men, among them the current Publisher and Chairman of the Board, Michael Ringier. One of his classmates was Thomas Trüeb, who years later would launch and push forward Ringier's successful international expansion. To this day he has been carrying activities abroad into new regions of the world, most recently in Africa, to Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and Tanzania.

That first class was followed by eighteen more over the past 40 years. To date, the Ringier School of Journalism has trained 335 journalists, 146 women and 189 men. In the current class, the 19th, seventeen trainees are enrolled at the school.

The journalism school is nicknamed «Jouschu» by insiders, its students are dubbed Jouschus. They are looked after, or rather spoiled, by the Jouschu's two matrons: Margritli Wagner and Annemarie Renggli.

The list of early alumni reads like a «Who's Who» of the Swiss media industry. Even Ringier CEO Marc Walder took his first steps there. The school's reputation grew with the stellar careers of its graduates. Now it is highly renowned, and had it not been for the Ringier School of Journalism there would be no MAZ - the Swiss school of journalists in Lucerne. Not all applicants started out modestly. ▶

Publisher Hans Ringier founded the Ringier School of Journalism forty years ago at Römerhalde in Zofingen, Switzerland.



In the former library the Ringier AG board of directors meets twice a year. As in all the other rooms of the Villa Römerhalde contemporary paintings from the Ringier collection adorn the walls. At right, in the foreground is a work by Doug Aitken. It has been part of the collection since 2002.



In the basement a vintage bowling alley with a mechanical movement and mysteriously inscribed balls exudes a lot of charm. Rien ne va plus!

## Facts about the School of Journalism

The Ringier School of Journalism was founded in 1974. Over the past forty years 335 journalists have been trained there, 146 women and 189 men. The list of graduates reads like a «Who's Who» of the Swiss media business. They all helped establish the school's excellent reputation. A training course lasts two years. The call for applications usually attracts two to three hundred interested candidates, but only eighteen are accepted. The training is comparable to an apprenticeship. It comprises learning on the job and at school. The next call for applications is in January 2016, the course will begin in the summer of 2016.



The former living room is now the classroom. The fireplace and the stucco are misleading; Wi-Fi web access, a video projector, light and sound systems guarantee contemporary forms of teaching.



The anniversary book: Profiles of the most famous alumni, written by the current class of journalists - a collector's item.



► Some had already proved their mettle in their letters of application. Swiss TV host Ueli Schmezer was merciless, lambasting tabloid journalism of the «Blick» style: «What they practice at times hardly counts as what I call journalism; in addition, I wouldn't let the very high circulation that they like to point out serve as an excuse for cheap claptrap and sensationalist journalism.» Today, this Robin Hood of the common consumer is knee-deep in tabloid journalism with «Kassensturz», his own consumer protection show. More subtle but no less feisty was Peer Teuwsen's bid for a trainee posi-

tion with «Schweizer Illustrierte»: He felt that the «SI's boring language is in need of improvement.» In the past years, Teuwsen was in charge of the Swiss section of the highbrow German weekly «DIE ZEIT»; he recently changed jobs and joined the daily «Neue Zürcher Zeitung». The large number of applicants proves that the Ringier School of Journalism meets a need. Between 200 and 300 people usually answer the call for applications. Talking to the second head of the school, Franz C. Widmer - in office from 1979 to 1986 - you quickly realize that to this day, the call for applications, the se-

▼ The school's head, Hannes Britschgi (l.), with his predecessor, Fridolin Luchsinger. Initially, Luchsinger doubted if the School of Journalism was in the right place at the villa Römerhalde. Later, he changed his mind. «I realized the advantages of the remoteness.»

lection process and the training have remained much the same in broad terms. The publishing house was looking for intelligent, curious and enthusiastic talent and continues to do so. They all undergo a multi-level test of knowledge, are subject to a personal interview and must submit written assignments. After a second interview, those in charge of the editorial teams choose their candidates from a short-list. The training course is similar to the Swiss apprenticeship model. Trainees acquire their skills working on the job as well as through school. The faculty is comprised of practicing journalists, the best in their field. Of course, nowadays the curriculum encompasses a host of new subjects such as online research, video training, data security, twittering for professionals, and social media. In practice this means that Susanne Fischer from the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (iwpr), Middle East Manager, quartered in Beirut, will teach data security, because from working in Syria, Iraq and Lebanon she knows that proper encrypting may well become a matter of life or death for journalists and their sources. Blogger and TV host Richard Gutjahr demonstrates and teaches how to make viable video pieces with a smartphone and little extra equipment. VJ and investigative journalist Hansjürg Zumstein



## «The Villa is a house of secrets»

### How was your beginning at the Ringier house?

Sämi Beljean: I was terribly nervous when I got an interview with Hans Ringier. But I liked him right away. He had a close link with his garden - he knew each flowerbed, each tree.

### There are quite a number of trees at «Römerhalde».

The grounds comprise almost four acres. The variety of trees is fantastic: The «Mar-roni» tree - a sweet chestnut -, rare birch trees, different kinds of maples, pine trees, common spruces and copper beeches, as well as an entire forest of hornbeams. And then there are the hedgerows.

### And a truly rare tree.

Yes, one of the thickest birch trees in Switzerland with a beautiful bark grows here.

### Your gardener's heart has seen many difficult moments.

In June 2011, we lost eight big trees in a storm. That really hurts.



### Does the Römerhalde mean a lot of work?

Not the way it used to. Hans Ringier grew his own plants. His vegetable garden and his flower cultures were here, at Römerhalde. Today, what remains is taking care of the lawn, the hedgerows and the trees. That's a bit less varied.

▲ Sämi Beljean, 53, has been a private gardener for thirty years. In 1987 he left chocolate manufacturer Rudolf Sprüngli to work for Hans Ringier.

### You look after the school house. It's an impressive villa.

To me the villa is a house of secrets.

### Is it haunted?

No, I'm talking about old times. Once, General Guisan, Switzerland's commander-in-chief during World War II, came to visit. In a photo the general is sitting there in an open car next to Paul Ringier, whose son Hans Ringier holds the door open.

### How do you get along with the students?

Quite well, actually. But it does happen every now and then that I have to put almost the entire class into my van and drive them to the train station at lightning speed.

### You live in the gardener's cottage.

I live in a beautiful home; I love my job, which enables me to work outside. At Ringier there are five gardeners taking care of the private and company grounds in Zofingen, Merlschachen and Zurich. We're never bored.



teaches the high-end version of VJ journalism.

The basic training courses, however, are still indispensable: investigation, story, coverage, profile, report, interview, feature, commentary and column as well as media law, ethics and literature.

The course is organized as a system of units. Six weeks at the editorial offices are followed by one week of classes at Römerhalde. Wednesdays are called «horizon days». The class leaves the quiet park to join the noisy hustle and bustle of the outside world - going to corporations, factories, research laboratories or to political and social hotspots like the Federal Parliament or FIFA. These outings provide them with opportunities to expand their networks as well as meet national and international players in person.

The training takes two years, including two three-month internships hosted by other editorial offices. These can be in-house, outside or abroad. During the last rotation two thirds of the class went abroad, to Berlin, Hamburg and Cologne in Germany and to Lagos, Nigeria. Trainee Céline Krapf swapped her regular editorial office at the Blick newsroom news desk for a guest stint at the offices of «Pulse.ng» of Ringier Nigeria. Thanks to her willingness to take risks and her curiosity she had an invaluable experience. From Nigeria she wrote to DOMO: «Lagos didn't disappoint. It is a new adventure each and every day. My first mission was turning my colleagues

into friends and my hotel room into a home... I'm grateful to be able to experience this, and I'm happy that I jumped at this opportunity.»

Can one learn journalism? «The mother of all questions,» quips the second head of the School of Journalism, Franz C. Widmer. His answer: «The skills of the trade can be taught and learned; values and character, however, cannot.» The longest-standing head of the school - and a longtime editor-in-chief of many Ringier publications - Fridolin Luchsinger, adds: «One can learn how to write a story. Whether this will bring forth a talent for brilliant writing is another matter altogether.»

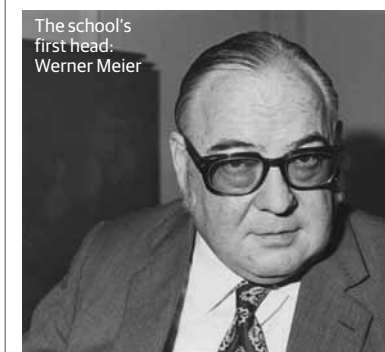
On December 8th, the 40th anniversary celebration of the Ringier School of Journalism took place at Ringier's Zurich headquarters. Publisher Michael Ringier, Frank A. Meyer, chairman of the foundation's board, and Hannes Britschgi, the head of the school, welcomed more than 300 guests, among them the Swiss minister for media, Doris Leuthard, whose visit honored the Ringier publishing house's decades of private commitment to education and training. To celebrate the school, the «Jouschu» has produced a collected volume with many profiles of former alumni, written by the school's current students.

Forty years of private commitment to the training of journalists in this country by the Ringier family of publishers deserve a big thank-you - indeed the gratitude of Switzerland as a whole. 🌐

▲ The morning ritual at the Villa Römerhalde: The students make themselves at home with a latte macchiato and the daily newspapers on the wonderful terrace, taking a deep breath before tackling the journalistic apprentice pieces in the classroom.

## Fibo Deutsch on the school's director Werner Meier

The apparently good-natured, pudgy, passionate cigar smoker goes down in history as the director of the first training course at the Ringier School of Journalism, from 1974 to 1976. But before he could carry through the second course, DPhil Werner Meier, aged 64, died of a ruptured appendix on February 7th, 1978. The Römerhalde mentor was much more than just a teacher. For thirty-one years he had worked as the editor-in-chief of Schweizer Illustrierte and managed to bring about a turnaround during one of the most difficult periods in the history of Ringier publishing. In 1938, on the eve of World War II - having studied German and English literature in Munich and Zurich - the 24-year old Meier joined the editorial team of Ringier's flagship publication, the Schweizer Illustrierte Zeitung (SIZ). The magazine had been ordered to remain «strictly neutral». SIZ readers and advertisers rebelled and left the magazine in droves interpreting its impartiality as weakness and a lack of opinion. Ringier was threatened with a serious crisis. In 1940, the publishing sector revenues reached a deficit for the first time. Owner Paul Ringier took action and appointed young Werner Meier as editor-in-chief of the magazine. Meier made use of the new freedom and turned the hitherto clueless political reporting into the magazine's focus, shaping it with an intransigent patriotism and thus making an invaluable contribution to the nation's «spiritual defense». Meier managed to recruit professional journalists for the SIZ, despite Ringier's bad reputation as a publishing house for pabulum. These were a new type of journalist with a good sense of the interplay between word and image. Success returned. In 1972, Meier said to me, his successor: «I know my time has come. The magazine needs a new impulse.» He had the magnanimity not to just simply resign, but to pass on his knowledge.





## Alumni

335 journalists have been trained at the Ringier School of Journalism. Many are shaping the Swiss media landscape. A few of them are listed below.

1974-1976  
Thomas Trüb  
Chairman of the Board  
of Ringier Pacific Ltd

1993-1994  
Marc Walder  
CEO Ringier AG

1974-1976  
Michael Ringier  
Publisher



1977-1978  
Fredy Hämmerli  
Chairman at Swisscontent



1987-1988  
Susanne Hochuli  
Member of the  
governing council of  
the Canton Aargau



1993-1994  
Peter Balzli  
SRF correspondent  
in London



1989-1990  
Peer Jentsen  
Product Development  
Neue Zürcher Zeitung



1997-1998  
Silvia Binggeli  
Editor-in-chief  
Annabelle magazine



1993-1994  
Gregor Sonderegger  
Chief of Staff/Deputy Head  
of News Swiss TV SRF



1983-1984  
Philipp Loepfe  
Author  
Newsportal Watson.ch



2003-2004  
Andreas Böni  
Director Sports/Soccer  
Blick Group

1977-1978  
Norbert Neiminger  
Publisher  
Schaffhauser Nachrichten



1999-2000  
Christian Dorer  
Editor-in-chief  
Aargauer Zeitung



# Atrocities run riot on the web

The terrorist organization «Islamic State» (IS) intends to establish a caliphate in the Middle East through inhuman violence – and state-of-the-art propaganda that is simple and clear, terrifying and up to date. IS uses Twitter and Facebook and aims to win Muslims around the globe over to its «holy war».

Text: Peter Hossli.  
Photos: Militant Website/Ap Photo/Keystone, Steve McCurry/Magnum, Mary Evans /Ronald Grant Archive/Interfoto.

The colors as well as the characters are plain and clear. The shimmering desert is an austere yellow. The kneeling prisoner wears bright orange. His eyes and his shaved head are facing the camera. The viewer is meant to know immediately that this is American journalist James Foley. Next to him – in black – stands his executioner. The man's face is veiled, masking his identity. In his left hand he is holding a dagger.

Foley utters a few sentences. The masked figure has a British accent. What follows is obvious before it happens. The executioner – dubbed «Jihad John» – beheads James Foley (1971-2014).

Plain and clear: in times of war that is good propaganda. The propaganda of the terrorist organization «Islamic State» (IS) is frighteningly perfect.

The barren earth reveals what the IS is fighting for: land in the Middle East. The victim's orange overall is a reminder of the Islamic prisoners at the US military base Guantanamo. The executioner's black is the martial color of the marauding IS mob. By wearing a mask he is showing judges

and prosecutors: «You'll never prove who I really am in court.»

The five-minute video is perfectly staged, diligently edited; several cameras shot the images simultaneously. It spreads like wildfire through the Internet. Millions see it on their cellphones and tablet computers, and share it with a click, before the old media – TV, radio and print – even begin to cover it.

Admittedly, the video shows something horrifying. But subtle stylistic devices – like the ones employed by Alfred Hitchcock (1899-1980) – make it more bearable. The British film director used to suggest things without actually depicting them. The German news magazine Der Spiegel quoted American documentary filmmaker Alex Gibney on the decapitation video: «It is an interesting aesthetic choice not to show the actual beheading. I can't be sure, but they seemed to dial it back just enough so that it would get passed around. In a way, it makes it all the more chilling, that it was so carefully stage-managed and edited to achieve the maximum impact.»

A whole number of videos like this one are circulating; there may be

more to come, considering that the IS is holding more people hostage. Brits and Americans in particular are at risk of dying for propaganda purposes. Their governments flatly refuse to pay any ransom.

Propaganda provokes counter-propaganda. There has been a loud outcry to ignore these barbaric videos. As soon as one of them is posted online, the news goes out under the hashtag #ISISMediaBlackout. By no means should anyone do the terrorists the favor of watching these images.

The US State Department appeals to young Muslims not to join the IS, warning them via Twitter. Using the hashtag #ThinkAgainTurnAway they publish photographs of children suffering from the terror, and pictures of captured IS fighters.

Still, there is no way to stop the IS propaganda. The marauders have mastered pop culture. They are familiar with people's passion for indulging in horror – they learned that from Hitchcock, too.

These beheadings help them recruit thousands of Islamist fighters, who are dazzled by a Muslim standing over an American kneeling submissively by his side. From their point of view this is a reversal of the global power dynamic. Suddenly, the allegedly weak person becomes powerful.

This is the message that IS henchmen employ to establish a caliphate, an Islamist state, which will originate in the borderland between Syria and Iraq and spread from there. Within

its borders the Shariah would apply, the stone-age law of Islam. Terror would run riot. Women would have no rights. Whoever opposed the rulers would risk their skins.

The war for the caliphate can be followed almost in real-time. Marching towards Mosul, IS propagandists sent out 40,000 Tweets a day. Whenever Twitter closes down one of their accounts, they open a new one within minutes. They Tweet in Arabic, English, French and Spanish, so their messages do not just reach Aleppo ►



Scene from a five-minute video: American journalist James Foley (left) is beheaded on August 19th, 2014, in the Syrian city of Ar-Raqqah. Foley is wearing an orange overall, which is supposed to be reminiscent of the prisoners at Guantanamo. He is forced to say that the USA are his «real killers».





► or Baghdad, but Barcelona and Berlin, London and Lyon. IS wants to call Muslims from around the world to join their battle. IS ideologists derive many of their ideas from the concepts of Joseph Goebbels (1887-1945), the head of Nazi propaganda. Like the Nazis, the IS believes in highly esthetic images, martial appearances, dark shirts, ranks and columns. Goebbels employed the state-of-the-art media of his time – first radio and the cinema, later television. Despite being anchored in the desert, IS is very with it. The terrorist group posts its videos wherever teenagers tune in, on news services like Kik and WhatsApp, on social networks like Twitter and Facebook. Both the IS and the Nazis are totalitarian. Their propaganda is meant to unite their own people, to recruit utterly fearless warriors and to intimidate their enemies. Goebbels hired film esthete Leni Riefenstahl (1902 – 2003). She filmed the Wehrmacht and the Waffen-SS marching in unison. Displayed on the screen was a concentrated force, ready to

conquer Europe and the rest of the world. In the IS propaganda videos Muslims, clothed in black, are seen goose-stepping. They fire salvos from Kalashnikovs, they hoot from racing pick-up trucks. They seem united, like a concentrated force, ready to conquer the Islamic world. The propaganda is working. So far, some three thousand people from Western countries have already joined the IS, among them over one hundred Americans. Thousands more from the Middle East are moving to Syria and Iraq to kill and to die. On IS websites they learn what kind of shoes to wear, whether they will be able to buy toothbrushes, and how the new fighters can meet the old. Before anyone can join the «holy war» they receive the order to «Kik me»: They are supposed to contact the IS via Kik's messenger service. For a long time Saudi-Arabian terrorist leader Osama bin Laden (1957-2011) was considered the most effective Islamist propagandist. He orchestrated the attacks against the U.S.A. on September 11th, 2001. Bil-

▲ They stone adulterers, murder people of different faith and political enemies in heinous ways: the jihadist terror organization Islamic State in Syria and Iraq (ISIS), which has recently decided to call itself simply Islamic State (IS). The masked figures below the black flag with the Shahada (the Islamic creed) are wielding high-tech arms. They produce professional propaganda videos and document their military campaigns in a report listing the organization's successes in the style of a business report for potential investors.

lions watched live on TV when terrorists destroyed what was one of the most auspicious sights anywhere – the Manhattan skyline. It stands for freedom and plenty. There has hardly ever been an image that instilled more fear and terror in the world than that damaged cityscape. As if that weren't enough, Bin Laden announced more terror via video messages. However, they seem static and stale today, their circulation old-fashioned and slow. For years, Bin Laden sat in a cave somewhere in the Hindu Kush, squatting on the floor, looking into the camera, reading out monologs. Esthetics? He didn't care. To him it was enough to have a gun in the picture. Most of the time he was wearing a brownish robe, sitting in front of a brownish background; at first his beard was brownish, too, then it turned grey. Smugglers would carry the videos across the mountains to the TV stations, usually Al-Jazeera in Qatar. From there the videos went around the world. That's old hat now. The jihadists bank on the esthetics of Hollywood

films and video games. Nobody smuggles video cassettes anymore. As soon as a piece is edited and the soundtrack is added, the IS propagandists post it on the Internet. Battle reports are published on sites like JustPaste, sound bites on SoundCloud. They use Instagram for photographs. Bin Laden spurred Islamists on to commit attacks in the West. The IS does not. Appeals to destroy the Western world are almost entirely absent. Their propaganda is focusing on the «near enemy», says Fawaz E. Gerges of the London School of Economics, on Islamic leaders like Syria's president Bashar al-Assad, not on the «far enemy» like the USA. In mid-November the IS spread a video showing the beheading of American aid worker Peter Kassig (1988 – 2014). This film was different, less esthetic, a rush job, shot by a single camera, sloppily edited. Experts maintain that the signs point to a weakening of the IS after months of attacks by the Americans. Even the best propaganda is no protection against bombs. ☹

▲ For a long time Saudi-Arabian master terrorist Osama bin Laden was regarded as the most effective Islamist propagandist. He orchestrated the attacks on the World Trade Center on 9/11, 2001. Billions watched how terrorists destroyed one of the most auspicious sights anywhere – the Manhattan skyline – live on TV. This instilled fear and terror around the world.



## Fiction in place of history



The sequence is like an iconic collection of pop culture: Green-and-black Huey helicopters attack a village in the North-Vietnamese jungle – cleverly choreographed to Wagner's «Ride of the Valkyries». Robert Duvall, his bald head hidden underneath a broad-brimmed Confederate hat, orders a group of G.I.s to go surfing. Behind the coastline bombs are exploding, villages are burning, children are screaming. On the soundtrack, Mick Jagger starts singing a rock 'n' roll anthem. Francis Ford Coppola staged this fascinatingly frightening esthetics of death. In 1979, four years after the end of the war, he made «**Apocalypse Now**», the most compelling film about Vietnam. Many other movies followed in which the war in Southeast Asia was waged repeatedly. An entire nation was trying to get over an incident that had spawned profound self-doubt. Sugarcoated Vietnam War movies allow historic reality to be persistently displaced. Fiction takes the place of history.

Even in the years between 1968 and 1975 the Vietnam War was a major visual event, a tragic serial drama, broadcast on television for thousands of nights. News images of dying all-American boys became deeply embedded in people's consciousness. Like no war before or after, it could be followed in a direct and unvarnished way thanks to TV. That is why the military eventually blamed the media for this bitter defeat. The movies would change

all that. The four best known Vietnam War movies – «The Deer Hunter» (1978), «Apocalypse Now» (1979), «**Platoon**» (1986) and «Full Metal Jacket» (1987) – were made after the American troops had been pulled out of Vietnam. Titanic fairytale characters were allowed to fearlessly re-enact the war, with the logistic and advisory support of the US Army – and thus at least put a brave face on things.

The enemies of the USA hardly play a part in these films; their focus is on the 50,000 dead Americans, not on the two million Vietnamese who died. These are mostly seen in the role of exotically depicted Asian women, reduced to their sex-appeal, sweet-talking US soldiers, luring them into back-alleys and stabbing them to death. Vietnamese women throw grenades into helicopters starting up – as in Coppola's «Apocalypse Now». Women snipers shoot soldiers from ambush – as in Stanley Kubrick's «**Full Metal Jacket**».



The feminization of the enemy is nothing less than a hysterical reaction of the shocked American male psyche. It never got over the fact that the physically smaller and technically inferior Vietnamese could defeat the hyper-masculine, hyper-technologized Americans in battle.



# Ringier's best photos of the last quarter

Precision work, proper lighting and mutual trust: that's what made these five photographs possible – despite the fact that it was spring in winter, Mossad intervened and glowering bodyguards got in the way.

## FREDERIC PINET RALF JOST

Photographer  
Editor

**1** The editorial team at Swiss fashion magazine **«SI Style»** painstakingly plans when it comes to photographing the latest pieces of Haute Joaillerie once a year in Paris. The jewels are often worth more than a million Swiss francs. On the eve of the shoot, Richard Widmer – the magazine's fashion director – travels to the city by the Seine, where he gets to glimpse the new creations in utmost secrecy. Once he has selected what will be photographed, he plans the day of shooting in minute detail. As previously agreed, the jewelers have their individual pieces delivered on schedule for one to two hours, messengered by brawny, scowling bodyguards. These guys stay right on top of photographer Frederic Pinet. Presenting the precious gems in the proper light is an art that Pinet masters perfectly. «The light must to be refracted by the gold and the gemstones, it shouldn't reflect.» Just as promptly as the sparkling objects are delivered, they disappear again – into the safes of the top jewelers on the famous Place Vendôme. The steel-reinforced doors there are bolted everyday at 6 p.m. sharp.

## FABIENNE BÜHLER ULLI GLANTZ

Photographer  
Editor

**2** Wow! What a setting for Olympic gold medalist Dominique Gisin in **«Schweizer Illustrierte SPORT»** magazine. Photographer Fabienne Bühler set off at 5.30 a.m. for the Allalin glacier in the Valais Alps to capture the Alpine glow of dawn. That took care of part 1 of the mise-en-scène. Part 2 followed later in a mobile photo studio in a conference room of the Schweizerhof Hotel at Saas Fee. The gossamer golden dress was tailor-made for Dominique. The ski racer has brought her skis, poles and ski boots. In this get-up she gears up for schussing – on a table converted into a «ski-run». The light in the studio matches the

Alpine glow perfectly; even the airstream is simulated – by a wind machine. Part 3 of the mise-en-scène follows on the computer in Zurich. The two images are digitally combined and finally, Gisin's equipment is color-coordinated with her golden dress.

## REMO NÄGELI NICOLE SPIESS

Photographer  
Editor

**3** A rare and precious picture. Photographer Remo Nägeli managed to shoot it for **«Schweizer Illustrierte»**. It depicts the former abbot of the Einsiedeln monastery, Martin Werlen, visiting a Palestinian family in East Jerusalem. Where Jews, Muslims and Christians often clash in animosities, the clergyman is sitting in a living room, relishing delicious sweets made especially for him, and enjoying the hospitality. The story that led to this friendship begins with a sweater Werlen wanted to buy on the market in Jerusalem during the summer. Only, he hadn't any money with him. The vendor trusted the stranger, gave him the sweater, telling him to bring the money later, which the abbot did. In the meantime the vendor's son has visited Werlen in Switzerland and now the abbot is on a return visit in the Holy Land. It is also a bit of a miracle that the photograph was taken at all. Remo Nägeli was picked up at immigration – most likely by the secret service Mossad. The photographer had stamps from South Sudan and Jordan in his passport, from previous assignments. After one and a half hours of questioning the agents let the Swiss man go and had him escorted to Martin Werlen.

## THOMAS SENF DENISE ZURKIRCH

Photographer  
Editor

**4** The assignment that photographer Thomas Senf was given by the Swiss magazine **«Schweizer Landliebe»** in early 2013 was clear. For a story about winter hiking

possibilities in the Bernese Alps he was to supply photos of snow-covered landscapes in bright sunlight. So far, so good. Only, what do you do when the weather doesn't play along? «We had to postpone the shoot several times,» Senf recalls. One morning, when the weather finally improved, he set out snowshoe-hiking through the Gastern valley with the accompanying journalist, where they found spring-like conditions, even though it was the middle of winter. «To produce appealing images despite adverse circumstances is a challenge that I face time and again,» Senf explains. And so, a simple report – like the one about winter hiking (with barely any snow) – can «become very exciting at times.»

## MARIE-LOU DUMAUTHIOZ

Photographer  
Editor

### JULIE BODY

**5** At first glance, this image may seem shocking. Sooner or later you ask yourself: Do I want to see this? Why does this young woman with burn scars put herself on display like this? The photograph shot by the just 18-year-old Marie-Lou Dumauthioz and published in the French-speaking weekly magazine **«L'illustré»**, is certainly stirring. It is one in a series of ten black-and-white photographs depicting people with tattoos, scars from accidents, or the consequences of anorexia or burns. Dumauthioz attended the Vevey photo school. She wanted her work to show «the traces life leaves behind on the human body – apart from the natural ageing process». She found ten young people from Romandy for her project via social networks, among them 17-year old Céline, who suffered severe burns at a barbecue party on the Swiss National Holiday, August 1st. «I chose a special light that allowed her to feel as if she were in a bubble. Céline decided which parts of her body she wanted to show,» Marie-Lou Dumauthioz explains.

In this feature DOMO regularly presents the best photographs published by Ringier titles in the past quarter





FOCUS ON RINGIER

In this feature DOMO regularly presents the best photographs published by Ringier titles in the past quarter





# «I'd follow my CEO on Twitter»

Whenever **Marc Walder** returns from New York there's a shake-up at Ringier Pressehaus. His most recent trip inspired a new five-point plan. In this interview Ringier's CEO talks about its implementation and reveals his investment plans for 2015.

Text: Bettina Bono. Photos: Stefan Falke.



Ringier's CEO calls on «The Grey Lady». The New York Times is an influential nation-wide newspaper from New York City. Here, too, the consensus is that online advertising needs to become more creative. Marc Walder: «I know that many firms have trouble with this, but the fact is that even the New York Times is doing it.»



## Marc Walder, you came back from New York three days ago. How small does Zurich seem to you?

When it comes to cosmopolitan life-style and an international mix, Zurich is quite big, too. In terms of innovation, entrepreneurial thinking and the will to move forward, however, Zurich feels small. The fascinating thing about New York is the pace and the indomitable will to make everything advance. To me, New York is the place with the highest proportion of people driven by enthusiasm.

## Which encounter impressed you most on this trip?

My visit to Twitter. I felt a spirit of optimism there, an immensely cooperative climate combined with the desire to move this still young company forward - Twitter's approach is highly professional and governed by a clearly recognizable strategy. Their focus on technology is phenomenal. Twitter shows how efficiently content can be distributed and how much that business model is data-driven. Everything is based on facts and figures; very few decisions are taken intuitively.

## You yourself became an active Tweeter on October 24. What are your insights after 94 tweets?

First of all, it's hard work! I'd set out to write only meaningful Tweets. After all, I'm Tweeting as the representative of a media company - hardly ever as a private individual. Communication on Twitter is very direct and open - sometimes too open for my taste. Apart from a few

snide comments, however, the climate in the Twitter universe is positive and inspiring. People respect each other and want to share knowledge. I highly recommend it. There's no reason for Ringier employees not to be registered with Twitter - of course, whether as a Follower or an active Tweeter is for each and every one to decide.

## You're not stressed by the fact that after a meeting you will now find 130 new Tweets as well as the phone calls you missed and various e-mails?

That's what I asked Mark S. Luckie, Twitter's Manager of Journalism and News. He follows - get this: 1,313 people and receives one Tweet per second on average. He says it's like dipping your big toe into a river to gauge the temperature. To him, Twitter is a trend indicator. I follow some 40 people. That's enough.

## US media use social networks more intensely than we do. What opportunities are we missing right now?



Stars get together at Times Square: Elmo (v.l.n.r.), Mickey Mouse, Marc Walder and the Cookie Monster.

There are certain things that they do better in the U.S. right now, and there is no reason why we shouldn't adopt those at once, and I really mean at once. If you do these things well you have a definite competitive edge in Europe. So why not look closely and find inspiration?

## Inspiration being a polite word for cribbing?

There is no downside. They show us how content may be distributed through social media; what they call Social Lift is crucial. Or they work with new advertising formats that do well on American platforms. That's where you can see how to present interesting videos and how you can optimize a website with the proper technology.

## You mentioned videos. Ringier has long had a fully equipped studio in Zurich.

Unfortunately, though, we don't make enough use of it. And if a given employee now asks, «Does Walder mean me?», I say, «Yes, I mean you!» Let's get soccer players, politicians, musicians and coaches into our studio, do what Huffington Post Live does and produce video on site. Let's just do it. That's the only way to enter a learning curve.

## How do you want to implement your five-point plan?

I'm not the one who has to implement it - my job is to inspire, to set the agenda, to launch initiatives. It is our employees who will implement it. To be more specific, though: We're bringing in some specialists from the U.S. They're happy to come. Ringier

has an excellent reputation, even in New York.

## Will our journalists be communicating in German or English on these social networks?

All of us here are working for a media company that is represented in 15 countries. Our company languages are German, English, Hungarian, etc. I personally often communicate in English because I want to reach all of our employees. Speaking for myself, I'd make a point of following my CEO on Twitter if only to see and get a sense of what he's up to.

## Apart from journalistic quality we will now have to mind that each piece is worked up in a «channel-friendly» manner and shared. Is it no longer enough to write good stories?

The demands on media professionals' versatility are much higher than they were a few years ago. Take Michael Ringier, for instance. He keeps educating himself in order to understand the world of media. The other day he told me: If I ever went away for a year I don't know if I would be able to catch up again. That is the reality. And that's what's so wonderfully exciting.

## How soon do you want your five-point plan to be implemented?

As soon as possible. Still, we don't want to do things for the sake of doing things. We won't address all five points at once. Optimizing social media can be an ongoing process. In order for people to be part of the change I am encouraging them to go on Twitter, to educate themselves in all things digital and to see what others are doing.

## What about the further development of our newsrooms? When Blick's newsroom in Zurich was launched four years ago it was the most modern in Europe.

There's hardly any need for physical refurbishments but adjusting the workflow, the technology and the allocation of resources is essential.

To me that launch was a starting signal for continuous development. Over the past few years that has been somewhat neglected. Newsroom 2.0 should now be followed by Newsroom 3.0.

## There are still four bosses at work in the Newsroom. Is it going to stay that way?

I'm still in favor of the idea that each publication should have its own editor-in-chief.

## Modernizing the Newsroom will require major investments.

Let's put it this way: Our five-point plan is included in the 2015 budget. It won't come cheap, but a media company only has two options: downsize or invest. So far we have always opted for the latter, because the Ringier family has chosen the path of the entrepreneur. That's something we should be very grateful for.

## Will the paywall become an issue again?

We have decided against a payment model for most platforms under the Ringier umbrella. We continue to favor our market penetration strategy.

## Ringier has recently invested in Africa. Will markets like Russia and South America also become attractive in 2015?

Russia will become difficult for foreign investors. South America is very exciting - but neither of those regions is of concern to us. With 15 countries we already have plenty of balls in the air. Maybe we'll add one or two more African countries, but I don't foresee any further geographical acquisitions.

## We are involved in Asia, too. Will these participations be expanded or divested?

We are in the process of examining our Asian portfolio. We are looking at Myanmar, which might be a good addition. Beyond that, our first priority is operative excellence. Sounds boring, but it's all the more effective.



## What about Germany?

Germany is a difficult challenge as we have two high-end but well-positioned special interest titles in that market.

We are aware that the business side - as opposed to the journalistic quality - is not satisfactory. At the end of the day you make publications in order to earn money. But that's not something that will happen overnight. We're convinced that both the management and the editorial offices are well equipped to make progress.

## Which have been our three most successful acquisitions?

Jobs.ch was pricey but nevertheless a fantastic buy. So was Ticketcorner. And the same goes for the Scout24 group. They're not the only ones - but then you're only letting me name three (laughs).

## What investments do you like in our core business, publishing?

The successes of SI Style and LandLiebe continue to fascinate me. There is one magazine that I am keeping an eye on: Flow. It proves that the demand for beautiful and lovingly crafted magazines is still substantial.

## The coming year will bring some milestones in your private life: You'll turn 50.

True. But I don't feel fifty. One thing has changed, though: I always used to be the youngest - whether it was as an editor-in-chief or as an executive. Now, it's different. I recently had dinner with Boris Collardi, the CEO of Julius Baer bank, and realized: He's ten years younger...

## Your daughter, Norah, will go to school in 2015. The beginning of an important phase in her life.

What was almost more important was when she went to kindergarten. That's when she started leaving home. But there was another emotional moment in that respect: We were on holiday in the Ticino when my 17-year-old daughter Coralie, all dressed up for dinner, came towards me. I looked at her and realized all at once that she is now a young woman.

## What else moved you in 2014?

The fact that Ringier really established itself in Africa and that we managed to close the Scout24 deal with KKR. A major blow was the sudden death of my father. There's not a single day that I don't think of him. Not out of grief but with respect and humility. My father's values were integrity, honesty, reliability and the unceasing effort to make the best of any situation. Those are precepts that I try to follow. ☺

## THE FIVE-POINT PLAN



**Mobile**  
Mobile access to content is the future



**Social Media**  
Social Media bring traffic



**Video**  
Video formats are becoming more important



**Creative Advertising**  
More creativity in advertising is called for



**Technology**  
Investments in technology are necessary



# News produced by machines

An increasing number of editorial departments have computers generate news articles from data and figures – cheaply, quickly and without their readers noticing. Forbes, the LA Times and Berliner Morgenpost all have adopted this practice. What this change has to do with Heinz Ketchup. And why we still need journalists.

Text: René Hänig. Photos: Konstantin Inozemtsev and Tomasz Kaczmarczyk for Getty Images.



When the earth shook in Westwood, California, at 6.25 a.m. on March 17, 2014, mere minutes later on «Latimes.com» concerned readers were able to learn that the earthquake had a magnitude of 4.7 and that its epicenter lay between Beverly Hills and Santa Monica, five miles below the surface. In addition, they could read that during the preceding ten days no quakes stronger than 3.0 had occurred. At the end of the short message it said: «This post was created by an algorithm written by the author.»

The author credited was a journalist and programmer at the Los Angeles Times, Ken Schwencke. When the earth shook, he started awake, booted his computer and had only to counter-check the already written report on the earthquake before posting it online. The computer had taken the writing job off the journalist's hands. Schwencke himself had created the algorithm called «Quakebot» for the Los Angeles Times: In the event of an earthquake warning by the US Geological Survey the essential data would immediately be summarized and transferred to a template.

This is just one example of something that has been raising uncertainty and fear among media professionals for months and is dubbed «robot journalism». In the 20th century industrialization impacted textile manufacturing and watchmaking; a similar thing is happening in the media business right now. Machines are taking over the craft as well as the intellectual work. US professor Larry Birnbaum from

Around the world as well as in Germany, some companies and start-ups are already working on robot journalism. The leader of the field in the USA is Narrative Science. This company, headquartered in Chicago, specializes in transforming data into easily readable text types. Their service is even used by the internationally successful US business magazine Forbes. The editors are delighted: «Narrative Science transforms data into texts and insights.» Another US firm along the same lines is Automated Insights, headquartered in Durham, North Carolina.

In the German-speaking world companies like the agency Aexea, headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, court potential customers. This firm specializes in weather reports and sports newsflashes. Care for a sample? The agency's blog «Fussballheute.net» features a daily preview of the current day's German soccer league games – written by a computer. «Text-on.com» in Berlin – founded by Cord Dreyer, the former boss of the news agency ddpd – also sees a good business opportunity in automated sports reporting. That is why they have joined forces with the Fraunhofer Institute for Communication, Information Processing and Ergonomics near Bonn.

Publishing houses are also experimenting with robot journalism. The interactive team of the Berliner Morgenpost has written software that updates the online service page regarding fine-particle pollution in Germany's capital all by itself. Under «morgenpost.de/feinstaub» readers

will find the infographics representing the data and explanatory comments – the update happens automatically. Morgenpost Editor-in-chief Carsten Erdmann: «An algorithm can never

replace a journalist's intelligence, creativity and feeling for language, but when it comes to processing data in split seconds it is unbeatable.» The newspaper is still gathering experience. «If we conclude that the experiment is a success, we will consider applying it to other types of service in and around Berlin.» Swedish media scientist Christer Clerwall at Karlstad

## LIKE

- Algorithms are already being used to monitor, find and filter breaking news in the deluge of information.
- Researchers at the University of Virginia studied Tweets and were able to predict – in 19 out of 25 cases – crimes before they were even committed.
- In 2012, the «Huffington Post» registered more than 70 million comments on its page. Thirty fulltime moderators analyze these based on an algorithm.

## ERROR

- Dreadful translation errors – e.g. on the German site of online retailer «Alibaba.com», where the motorbike section offered «Körperteile» (human body parts) for sale.
- Just who owns the copyright of an automated text is debatable.
- Do users need to be informed when a product description is generated by a machine?

University recently studied the effects of automatically generated and manually written texts. He had students read short reports on American baseball games of the exact same length, written by a writing robot of the US company Automated Insights and by an experienced sports editor. The result of the survey: Most readers were basically unable to spot a difference. Many participants even assessed the PC's reporting as more objective. Will robot journalism soon make entire editorial departments redundant? The best-case scenario is that software won't take jobs away from journalists but rather support them in their work – by taking on tedious routine tasks for which there usually is no manpower anyway.

The automation of journalism has its limits, though, says Vincent Kaufmann, Director of the Institute for Media and Communications Management at the University of St. Gallen. «Automated reporting becomes difficult whenever there is a new or unforeseen event – like the terrorist attacks of September 11.»

Or the above-mentioned earthquake in California; the first short message from the computer was followed by detailed stories with statements from eyewitnesses, background information and an interview with the Mayor of Los Angeles – researched and written by a team of journalists. 🌐

## «Readers' needs for using texts will change – just like they did with ketchup»

Northwestern University in Illinois compares the current development to the global conquest by Heinz Ketchup. «Most people have never eaten hand-made ketchup. For years a machine-made tomato extract has been defining the standard.» Birnbaum expects that readers' needs for using texts will change in a similar way within the next twenty years.



# Blick turns 55: Happy Birthday!

Beloved and feared, praised and criticized. **Blick** has been dividing people's opinions for years. To be specific: for 55 years. On October 14, 1959, the first edition of Blick led with the headline: «The Servant Was Not the Murderer». Back then, the tabloid cost 20 centimes. Blick continues to surprise readers day by day, with big pictures and big stories. It remains «The newspaper for Switzerland».



## Blick

- Switzerland's only tabloid
- Published daily except on Sundays
- Paid circulation: 163,412
- With 667,000 readers, Blick is the most widely read paid newspaper in Switzerland
- The daily's format was modified repeatedly. However, Blick's true strength still lies in its exclusive stories. Sports coverage has always been a priority.
- Since March 7, 2010, Blick has been produced in an integrated newsroom as a publication of the Blick group
- [www.blick.ch](http://www.blick.ch)



For four years now, Blick has been produced in the Zurich newsroom along with SonntagsBlick, Blick.ch, Blick am Abend and Blickamabend.ch. The newsroom currently employs 125 editors and online editors and four writers. The photo desk numbers 21 employees, the layout team numbers 19, web TV and multimedia 15, production 6, the iPad team 5 and the administration 5 employees. Blick's management team numbers 5 members, SonntagsBlick's has 3, Blick am Abend 2 and Blick.ch 5 members. Blick's editor-in-chief René Lüscher (front row, standing, 5th from the left): «Blick needs to surprise, delight - and yes, irritate - every day.» Also in this picture: Deputy editor-in-chief Andreas Dietrich (first row, standing, 4th from the right).

Photo: Geri Born





## Stealing was permitted, killing was not

Donnie Brasco was his alias and stealing diamonds was his cover. For six years FBI agent **Joe Pistone** lived cheek by jowl with the Mafiosi. DOMO author Peter Hossli met him in the desert – surrounded by bodyguards.

It was the spring of 2007. Famous Mafia hunter Joe Pistone had just published an autobiographical book. I asked the publishers for an interview with him. For weeks nothing happened. Then the phone rang. The number on the display? «Unknown». «Pistone,» a voice says. The Mafia hunter. Our conversation is short, his instructions are plain: «Two weeks from today, in Las Vegas,» he demands. «I'll call you at 6 p.m.» Pistone, then 67 years old, was in

When FBI agent Joe Pistone began his duty as an undercover agent within Mafia circles his children were 7, 10 and 13. He thought the assignment would last for six months – it went on for six years.

hiding. Using the alias Donnie Brasco he had infiltrated one of the five large Mafia families during the 1970s and 1980s. For six years he lived and stole side by side with ruthless mobsters. No previous FBI agent had ever penetrated organized crime as deeply as Pistone. He collected evidence that led to the arrests of two hundred mobsters. The Mafia reeled. In 1997, director Mike Newell adapted Pistone's memoirs into a movie with Johnny Depp and Al Pacino. Las Vegas, two weeks after the phone call. Everything is ready for the interview at Bally's Hotel. The photographer has set up his lights in a suite. At 4 p.m. the phone rings. «Unknown», reads the display. «Are you in Vegas?» Pistone asks. «Yes, when can I expect you at the Bally's?» – «Never. Meet me at the South Point Casino in an hour.» He hangs up. South Point? The concierge at Bally's had never heard of it. «It's twenty miles south of here, in the desert,» the taxi driver explains. «Can you get there in an hour?» – «If I step on it.» Shortly before five he pulls up in

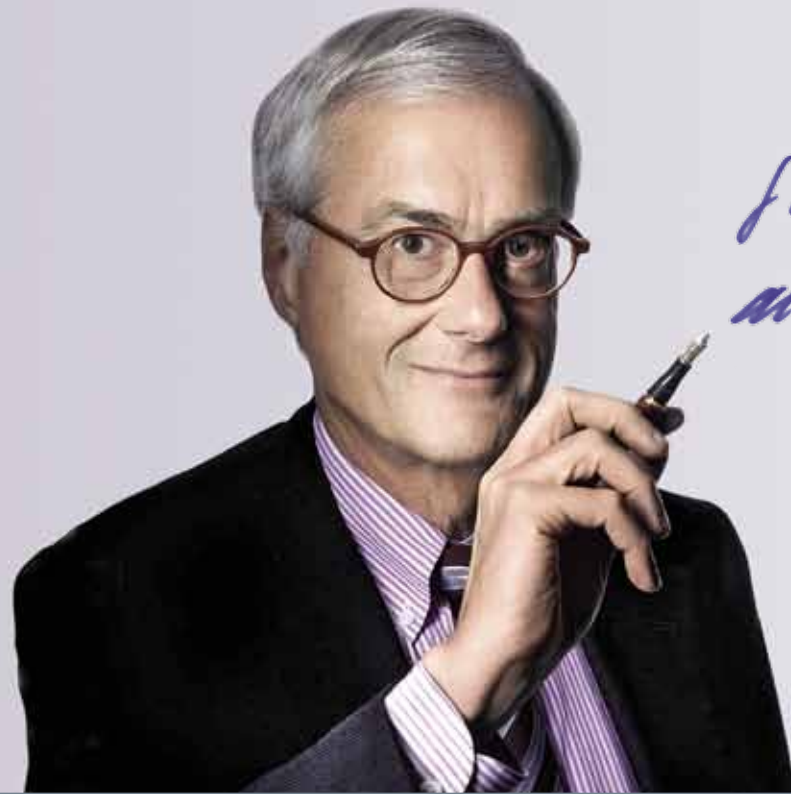
front of the place. In the lobby a handful of men with brawny arms are waiting. In their midst Pistone, a bald, chunky guy with a dark complexion. He hides his eyes behind sunglasses, which he never takes off. With a shuffling walk he leads the photographer and me to the swimming pool. There, more strongmen in shorts, seated on deck chairs. «These are my friends,» says Pistone. They are his bodyguards. Our conversation takes place outside, in the open. In the pool, children are splashing around with their mothers. Here, in the middle of a crowd, Joe Pistone feels safe. Which name did he use to register at the hotel, is my first question. «I'm not staying at this hotel.» He doesn't say where he's staying. Whenever he leaves home, he always travels under a new assumed name because he fears for his own life. The Mafia has placed a bounty of 500,000 dollars on his head. While he was living with the Mob he pretended to be a diamond thief. «If I hadn't committed any crimes, the

Mafia wouldn't have needed me.» He was permitted to steal but not to beat up or kill anyone. He says the Mafia is about one thing only: money. «The Mafia was happy with me. I brought them diamonds and gemstones,» he says. «Mobsters need to steal every day to finance their way of life. There are gangsters with an average income who manage money shrewdly and are always flush. But I knew fellas who raked in 100,000 dollars in one day and were broke a couple of days later. They'd gambled it all away.» He talks about his friendships with these evildoers. «There's no way you can see them seven days a week, 365 days a year, without becoming friends with them. One thing I always remembered, though: They were gangsters and murderers who were capable of killing their best pal at any time.» He was best man for Benjamin «Lefty» Ruggiero, the gangster played by Al Pacino in the movie «Donnie Brasco». Pistone has a certain respect for Lefty. «He spent fifteen years behind bars and never said a word. If he had blown the whistle,

his sentence would have been milder. He didn't do it. I respect that.» All of a sudden, Pistone gets up. He has a meeting. A business matter, he says. Will he answer some more questions? Will he agree to be photographed? «Pick me up at nine.» Hours later – he is waiting in the lobby. He's wearing the same pants and the same blue shirt as in the afternoon. The glasses are different. Four guys are standing around him. «We're all Italian,» one of them says politely. «My grandmother was Italian. She emigrated from Verona to Switzerland,» I reply. They roll their eyeballs. Which makes one thing immediately clear: In these circles, «Italian» always means Sicilian. Joe Pistone folds his long legs into a small rental car. One of his escorts sits in the front. Pistone gives his interview in the back seat. There is nothing like equality in the Mafia, he says. «You have to be white, male and Sicilian. The only role for women is that of the wife. Do they know that their husbands are Mafiosi? Of course. Do the children know? Of course.»

Photo: Charly Kurz/Laif





*food news  
and bad news*

**H**ungary's government is the most creative in Europe. However, it earns this distinction primarily when it comes to raising taxes - to be paid mostly by foreigners, and by creating new laws guaranteeing control and influence in areas where government should interfere as little as possible.

Unsurprisingly therefore, the Internet as a taxable entity provoked the same reaction from Prime Minister Orbán and his colleagues as a full bowl of food does when it is placed before my mongrel bitch Maja: Go for it! While in the case of my darling doggie nothing and nobody can stop this undertaking, Prime Minister Orbán, as an intelligent human being, suddenly buried the idea of an Internet tax. The cancelling of a political plan intended for a fairly quiet implementation is an absolute first for the Fidesz party, which governs with a two-thirds majority. However, the impetus of angry protests by tens of thousands of Hungarian citizens across the political party board served to bring the government to its knees. Hungarians were opposed to having both their individual freedom of opinion and an important component of modern lifestyle taxed or restricted. This is good news for journalists.

When the new media law was to be introduced a few years ago, there were protests as well. In Budapest citizens numbering in the several thousands marched against the potential restrictions of journalistic activities. At the time the issue was only the possibility of the government's patronizing of journalists and the imposition of more control. Yet, despite some critical points the EU and the Hungarian constitutional court had identified, the government was able to put the law into effect. Here, the impact of the citizens' protest was too weak and not broad-based enough to force the government to give in or even make concessions. After all, at stake wasn't individual freedom for the citizens, it was only the media's. And that's bad news for journalists.

*Michael Ringier*

# Employee questions



Please send your questions to:  
domo@ringier.com



Thomas Kaiser,  
CEO Ringier Digital  
and Chairman of  
the Board at  
JobCloud AG

«Continuity and agility - the next chapter in the JobCloud success story»

**JobCloud recently communicated an internal reorganization. What were the reasons for this?**

«The proposal for reorganization came from JobCloud's executive board and was discussed thoroughly with the board of directors. The reorganization coincides with the passing of the baton by the old management duo of Mark Sandmeier (CEO) and Michel Kaufmann (CMO) to a newly formed executive board headed by the new CEO, Renato Profico, previously head of sales. This will ensure on the one hand that the success story may continue without interruptions. The management team certainly made its mark in the last 15 years by building up the company to become the market leader and, successfully merged Jobs.ch AG and Jobup AG into JobCloud AG in 2013. Mark Sandmeier and Michel Kaufmann will continue their involvement with JobCloud as members of the board. On the other hand, the accompanying reorganization will also permit adjustments that will make the company even more fit and agile. This is essential if the company wants to hold its own in the dynamic digital markets.»



Nijan Ouliae,  
Social Media  
Manager Ringier  
AG

«It is advisable to tread carefully in social networks»

**Social Media are gaining more relevance at Ringier. What should employees be aware of when using them?**

«Employees are important ambassadors of the company. That is why it is advisable to tread appropriately carefully in social networks. If employees use social media for business purposes, it makes sense to declare their affiliation with the company. When making statements about business-related issues they need to clarify whether this is their personal opinion or the company's. Social media managers handle negative comments addressed to Ringier (as in a shitstorm) according to a defined process of escalation. It is advisable to link one's profiles on the various social networks. Each network has its own peculiarities such as different forms of publication or settings (for privacy etc.). Relevant and authentic status updates help to increase one's credibility. Ringier's internal social media team (see link on eDOMO) regularly looks at new trends in this dynamic environment and is happy to help with any questions.»



Robin Lingg,  
CEO Ringier Africa  
& Asia

«The excellent work of local teams ensures that customers get the best possible quality»

**Asia Inflight Limited recently announced the extension of its agreement with the CAAC (Civil Aviation Administration of China). What does this mean for Ringier Asia Pacific?**

«The fact that we have gained our partners' confidence for another ten years after twenty years of collaboration is testimony to the outstanding achievements and success of our local team. This has been and remains possible only thanks to the excellent work and organization on the ground. It ensures that our partners and customers get the best possible quality and unparalleled media penetration. This is an important step for Ringier Asia Pacific, as it entails a certain degree of predictability and continuity for all of our activities in Asia, which we are about to modernize strategically, specifically to digitize and to expand with a particular focus on China and Vietnam.»



Kilian Kämpfen,  
Chief Business  
Development  
Officer Ringier  
Digital

«We offer agencies individualized online booking tools»

**Omnimedia is introducing a new automated form of online marketing. How will this work and what are its benefits?**

«Nowadays, online bookings of advertisements are generally negotiated between Ringier as publisher and the agencies, using the phone and an Excel sheet, an often complicated and inefficient process. Our 'programmatic buying' approach allows us to considerably simplify the interaction with online agencies and advertising / media agencies. We offer the agencies individualized online booking tools that permit them to set up and implement customized standard bookings themselves. Once the campaign is launched, its performance may be monitored by the agency directly online. This not only saves time and money, it is also more satisfying to the agencies.»



## 10 YEARS

**Hasler Caroline**, Ringier AG.  
**Röthlisberger Peter**, Ringier AG.  
**Uensal Timur**, Ringier AG.  
**Davoli Isabelle**, Ringier Lausanne.  
**Devaux Corinne**,  
 Ringier Lausanne.  
**Gottraux Sidonie**,  
 Ringier Lausanne.  
**Mottier Natalia**, Ringier Lausanne.  
**Diemer Bastian**, Swissprinters.  
**Studer Sabrina**, Swissprinters.  
**Kurmann Gerold**, Ringier Print.  
**Krummenacher Rita**,  
 Ringier Print.  
**Zhou Kenny**, Ringier China.  
**Jihui Wang**, Ringier China.  
**Baicoianu Mihaela**,  
 Ringier Romania.

## 20 YEARS

**Bühler Jeannette**, Ringier AG.  
**Goldschmidt Anita**, Ringier AG.  
**Simmonds Nigel**, Ringier AG.  
**Waeber Christian**, Ringier AG.  
**Monnier Mireille**,  
 Ringier Lausanne.  
**Bulut Fatih**, Swissprinters.  
**Ivkovic Zoran**, Ringier Print.

## 25 YEARS

**Besançon Jean-Blaise**,  
Ringier Lausanne.  
**Schmid Roland**, Swissprinters.  
**Rudin Peter**, Swissprinters.  
**Imhof Markus**, Ringier Print.

## 30 YEARS

**Ruhstaller Ruedi**, Swissprinters.

## 35 YEARS

**Kleeb Werner**, Swissprinters.  
**Kohler Daniel**, Swissprinters.  
**Müller Peter**, Swissprinters.  
**Foresta Antonio**, Ringier Print.  
**Graf Armin**, Ringier Print.  
**Bachmann Edy**, Ringier Print.  
**Lack Anita**, Ringier Print.

## 40 YEARS

**Degelo Konrad**, Ringier Print.  
**Konrad Josef**, Ringier AG.

## RETIREMENTS

**Bissig Agnes**, Ringier AG.  
**Widmer Peter**, Ringier Print.  
**Burri Kurt**, Ringier Print.  
**Stalder Otto**, Ringier Print.  
**Knuchel Elisabeth**, Ringier Print.

### DEATHS:

**Hurni Otto**, 1.7.14  
**Köhli Toni**, 17.7.14  
**Brazarol Josef**, 2.8.14  
**Schenker Trudy**, 6.8.14  
**Berchtold Anna**, 14.8.14  
**Kollar Jozef**, 25.8.14  
**Bohli Theo**, 9.9.14  
**Kaufmann Alois**, 18.9.14  
**Koller Walter**, 21.9.14  
**Busato Gianni**, 26.9.14

# A colorful character from Africa

He can curse in Swahili, likes to ride his Harley all over the world and impressed an examiner from Rolls-Royce with his draftsmanship. **Nigel Simmonds'** life is the exciting stuff that novels are made of.

Illustration: Nigel Simmonds. Photos: private.



**Nigel Simmonds' self-portrait. At Ringier he used to do illustrations for Cash, today he works for Schweizer Illustrierte.**

members sunsets, safaris and the simple life. «One day we were by a riverside with 40 elephants, and I said: «Wow, Dad, they have really long eyelashes.»» The big beasts were standing just sixteen feet away from Nigel's nose. Speaking of which: Nigel likes to keep his nose to the wind, on his Harley Davidson Fat Boy. In Africa he used to cruise around on a BSA Bantam or a Russian Voskhod. One could easily write a book about Nigel, with chapter headings like: «Skipped school, sold fish» or «How I became the squash champion of Central Switzerland». Simmonds is a colorful character, from a colorful continent. **R.H.**

R.H



**From England to Africa and back: Nigel Simmonds as a teenager (l.) and today with his Harley Davidson. Motorbikes have always been a passion of his.**



## Editor's Choice

by Marc Walder

Are you familiar with these titles? Marc Walder tells you which books he's reading and why they fascinate him.

## BRAD STONE

## THE EVERYTHING STORE

American journalist Brad Stone's profile of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos. His company, the biggest online retailer, is notorious for exploiting and wearing out its employees. Bezos' economic foresight, however, makes Amazon «the most beguiling company» in the world. A biography that can really only be read as a cautionary tale.

ISBN: 978-0316219266

Publisher: Little, Brown and Company



## JOEL KACZMAREK

## DIE PATEN DES INTERNETS

They are smooth, intelligent - and multimillionaires: Oliver, Marc and Alexander Samwer. Whenever a really big online deal is in the works, the brothers are bound to be involved. That is why they are already being touted as three of the key founder figures of the last 20 years. No-one has come to grips with their lives and work as thoroughly as author Joel Kaczmarek.

ISBN: 978-3898798808  
 Publisher: FinanzBuch Verlag

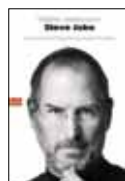


## WALTER ISAACSON

## STEVE JOBS

Steve Jobs created the cult brand Apple enhancing the digital world with its esthetics and aura. Walter Isaacson managed to gain the confidence of Apple's boss and could rely on his full support for his research. The result is a book about Steve Jobs and his company that is a must-read, not only for Apple fans.

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