



Vijesti

The channel's major news programme achieved an audience share of 27.2 per cent with reports on the most important events in Croatia and around the world.

Audience share
target group: 18-49



CSI: NY

The drama keeps track of the adventures of a group of forensic investigators who use modern technology to find crucial pieces of evidence in sometimes bizarre places.

Audience share
target group: 18-49

33.8%



Zabranjena Ljubav

Secret desires. Hidden animosities. A tangled web of family relations. The daily soap increased its average audience share with its proven formula for success.

Audience share
target group: 18-49

32.0%



Exploziv

This tabloid magazine presents unusual stories about your average people—next-door daily from Monday to Friday. Current and intriguing topics are the assets that *Exploziv*'s crew has profiled into a unique style of expression.



Exkluziv

RTL Televizija's strong access primetime lineup also includes the celebrity magazine *Exkluziv* hosted by Tatjana Juric (pictured) and Marko Lusic.



Big Brother

The third season was once again a huge success for the channel. The final show of 2006 drew 72.5 per cent of the target audience.

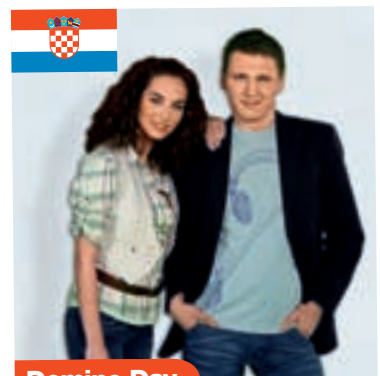
Audience share
target group: 18-49

72.5%



Invazija

The science fiction series tells the story of the aftermath of a hurricane, in which water-based extraterrestrials infiltrate a small Florida town and begin to take over the bodies of the town's inhabitants.



Domino Day

Young contestants from all over Europe set up 4.4 million domino stones weighing 35,200 kilograms.

Audience Share
target group: 18-49

45.8%

Highlights 2006

Break-even

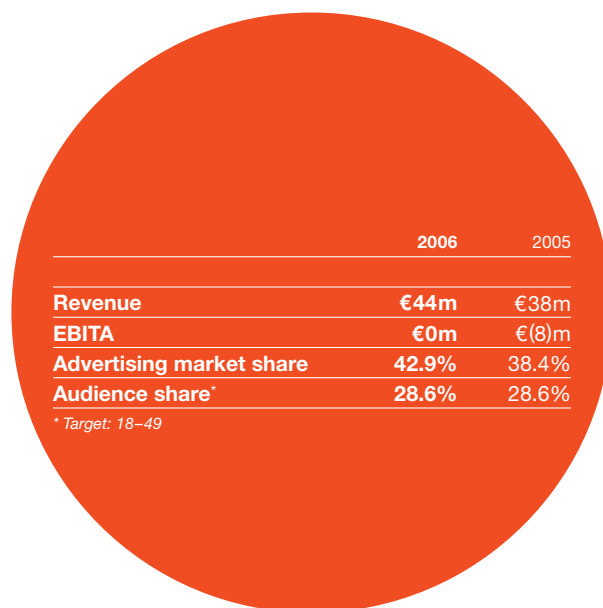
In its second full year of operations following its launch on 30 April 2004, RTL Televizija reached break-even.

Audience success

With a 28.6 per cent share of viewing in the 18–49 target group, RTL Televizija became Croatia's most-watched TV channel in this key demographic.

RTL Televizija's audience success is based on a mix of international formats such as *Big Brother*, US series and movies and locally developed news programmes and entertainment shows.

Another important pillar of RTL Televizija's success is its strong primetime line up, including the channel's major news programme *Vijesti*, the tabloid magazine shows *Exploziv* and *Exkluziv* as well as the daily soap *Zabranjena Ljubav (Forbidden Love)*.



National advertising breakdown

Source: AGB Research Data (estimates)

2006 (%)



RTL Televizija	42.9
HTV 1/2	43.3
Nova	13.8

National audience breakdown

Source: AGB Puls, Target: 18–49

2006 (%)



RTL Televizija	28.6
HTV 1	28.2
HTV 2	18.9
Nova	15.7
Others	8.6



International format, local success: the final of season three of *Big Brother* on RTL Televizija achieved 72.5 per cent of the target audience.

From zero to hero – two years in the life of RTL Televizija

By the end of 2006, its second full year of operation, RTL Televizija, Croatia's youngest commercial TV station, had achieved some remarkable results. Not only had it become the clear market leader in day and prime-time broadcasting to the vital 18–49 year old viewer group, but it had also broken even financially.

Our story starts in 2003 when the Croatian parliament decided to privatise one of its three public stations, HTV 3, which had an audience share of around 5 per cent. Of the seven applicants, RTL Group was awarded the franchise, and RTL Televizija launched on 30 April 2004. So, how do you build a station from scratch, and take it – perhaps uniquely so – from a standing start to top speed in such a short space of time?

Christoph Mainusch, CEO of RTL Televizija, picks up the story: “Well it wasn't exactly a standing start. RTL was known in the region, it's a big name and a strong brand, and so people were naturally curious. In addition, we were already tuned on people's remotes in the old HTV 3 position. And Croatia has one of the highest viewing times per individual in the world – four hours a day on average in the target audience. But it was hard work nevertheless. We started with ten desks, ten computers and ten people. Then we set out to build a really local station that was entertaining for the whole family. People just wanted to be entertained.”

In that statement the two key words are 'local' and 'entertaining', the qualities required to meet the tastes and desires of the target audience. RTL Televizija has achieved its success through its consistent programming policy, focusing on programmes the audience loves to watch. Starting with good licensing deals for successful foreign programmes, the station set about using the Group's experience and position to build up its roster of Croatian news shows and entertainment – but based on a successful mix of international formats such as *Big Brother* and locally developed shows. In effect, pursuing a television version of the business mantra 'think globally, act locally'.

“We started with ten desks, ten computers and ten people. Then we set out to build a really local station that was entertaining for the whole family.”

*Christoph Mainusch,
CEO of RTL Televizija*



Linked to this was a shrewd scheduling policy of broadcasting the same type of programme at similar times of day, and introducing special themed days, such as crime series days built around the *CSI* shows. Now, RTL Televizija is marginally ahead of HTV 1 in total viewing. But if you look at RTL Televizija's figures in primetime for September–December 2006, they show 36.3 per cent of the target audience while HTV 1 achieved 20.5 per cent of the audience share in primetime.

There have been some spectacular individual successes. The *Big Brother* final achieved 72.5 per cent of the target audience, while *Zabranjena Ljubav*, the first domestic soap opera, recorded 32.0 per cent. The most popular series in 2006 were *Prison Break* with 38.0 per cent and *CSI: New York* with 33.8 per cent audience share. RTL Televizija's News achieved an audience share of 27.2 per cent, while on the sporting front, Croatia's football match against Russia attracted 71.8 per cent of viewers. The result is that the other stations are having to change to compete, and pay closer attention to their scheduling, even copying ideas.

The market leading position, with clear positioning, better programme breaks and a younger audience, definitely helps the advertising 'power ratio'; that is, the advertising share as a proportion of the audience share. The total TV advertising market increased by 7.2 per cent in 2006 compared to 2005 while RTL Televizija advertising revenue increased by 19.9 per cent in the same period.

Aside from a successful programming policy, what else did it take? Says Mainusch: “Well, almost everything had to be done in house to start with. We recruited good young people who understood our strategy. We found the young Croatians highly

motivated and very dedicated. They still are. It's like a pioneering spirit – they are breaking new ground, making the TV landscape richer, not just for the audience but for themselves as well.”

The local emphasis is part of the future also. With a large number of new primetime shows planned for 2007, the focus will be on local comedy and local drama, with crime thrillers and crime docu-soaps planned. The station will be strengthening its informative programming too, with a political talk show and news and magazine programmes.

But as Christoph Mainusch is aware, there is plenty of hard work ahead: “In a small country like Croatia currently you obviously have to be the number one to be sure of generating a decent return. It is necessary that the regulatory bodies adopt media laws in line with European standards, so a second commercial broadcaster, even at number four on the market, could become profitable. With those media law changes, we will be able to develop a strategy for a family of channels. With digitalisation on the way we will look at thematic channels, and we will co-operate with all the new platforms, such as IPTV and video on demand. So there are plenty of ways in which the market will develop, not forgetting that we may at some stage want to look at geographical expansion within the region.”

Not a bad future at all for a company which started not so long ago with just ten people – it now employs 350. A final word from Christoph Mainusch about the success of RTL Televizija? “RTL is a strong brand, so the name and Group experience is part of the success. We have shown RTL Group can expand into new markets which offer potential for rapid growth. But we act independently. So just as important is the fact that this is a Croatian TV station, made for Croatians by Croatians.”