

PRESS RELEASE

New Media Champion: RTL Deutschland and G+J to Join Forces

- **Bertelsmann implements strategic priorities**
- **Growth alliance in competition with the global platforms**
- **Content powerhouse with 1,500 journalists**
- **Better use of strong brands and content**

Gütersloh / Hamburg / Cologne, August 6, 2021 – The media companies RTL Deutschland and Gruner + Jahr are joining forces to form a new national cross-media champion. The decision follows a review process lasting several months, with the aim of deepening the successful collaboration between the country’s leading private TV, radio, and streaming group and the publishing house with its powerful brands. The new company will start operating as one at the beginning of next year.

Bertelsmann CEO Thomas Rabe says: “The relevant bodies, RTL Group’s Board, and Bertelsmann’s Executive Board and Supervisory Board, have come to the conclusion that RTL Deutschland and G+J can better exploit their growth potential together. By forming this national media champion, Bertelsmann is implementing its strategic priorities as it has already done in France, the Netherlands and Belgium. This will strengthen our media businesses in the German market in the competition with the global tech platforms,” Rabe continued, “No other media company in this country can create such a cross-genre growth alliance. RTL Deutschland and G+J are a content powerhouse that combines the content expertise of 1,500 journalists, among other things. The companies bring together strong content and brands across the various media under one roof. This will generate annual synergies of around 100 million euros – largely due to growth.”

In February, RTL Deutschland and Gruner + Jahr had announced an open-ended review of an even closer collaboration and explored various avenues in the months that followed. The project teams were able to build on the successful cooperation in the intra-Group alliances founded by Bertelsmann: the Ad Alliance, the Content Alliance and the Tech & Data Alliance. RTL Deutschland and G+J will continue to benefit from the close exchange with other Bertelsmann companies, such as Penguin Random House and BMG.

The new company has USPs compared to its global competitors: It targets audiences in Germany with a unique range of local content across all genres. It brings together some of Germany’s most powerful media brands and is the creative and entrepreneurial home of many outstanding talents and media personalities. The company has a strong starting position and growth prospects in the D2C business. Finally, it will expand its leading position in ad sales through cross-media campaigns, and further improve its strategic options as a platform for potential partnerships.

Initial editorial concepts for the new joint venture include a cross-media expansion of the “Stern” and “Gala” brands around the topics of society, politics, investigative stories, and

people, and a significant expansion of the digital journalistic offerings of “RTL,” “Stern,” and “ntv.” A new TV format called “Stern Investigativ” will be launched. As a brand for high-quality documentaries and knowledge formats, GEO will complement RTL Deutschland’s offerings on various channels and create a new, attractive range of programming for families. A first high-end documentary series on the greatest phenomena of our time, to be created in cooperation between RTL, RTL+ and the GEO editorial team, is already planned for 2022.

The G+J businesses DDV, Territory and Applike, as well as the stake in Spiegel, will not become part of the new company. They will remain with Bertelsmann. And Gruner +Jahr will continue to be headquartered in Hamburg.

About Bertelsmann

Bertelsmann is a media, services and education company that operates in about 50 countries around the world. It includes the broadcaster RTL Group, the trade book publisher Penguin Random House, the magazine publisher Gruner + Jahr, the music company BMG, the service provider Arvato, the Bertelsmann Printing Group, the Bertelsmann Education Group and Bertelsmann Investments, an international network of funds. The company has around 130,000 employees and generated revenues of €17.3 billion in the 2020 financial year. Bertelsmann stands for creativity and entrepreneurship. This combination promotes first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world. Bertelsmann aspires to achieve climate neutrality by 2030. In 2021, Bertelsmann commemorates the 100th birthday of Reinhard Mohn, the Group's late post-war founder and longtime Chairman and CEO.

Bertelsmann online



Enquiries:

Bertelsmann SE & Co. KGaA

Markus Harbaum

Head Communications Content Team

Phone: +49 5241 80-24 66

markus.harbaum@bertelsmann.de