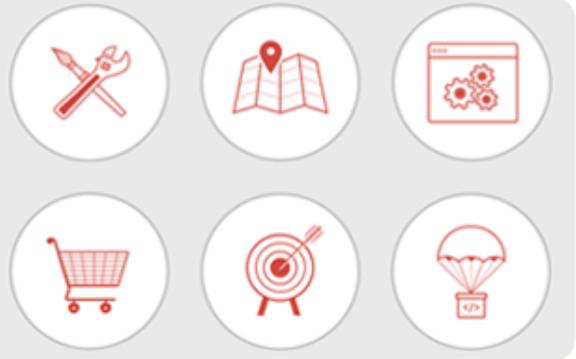




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The RTL Nederland *GTST: Spring Levend* app creates audience engagement during the summer break with the show *Goede Tijden, Slechte Tijden*

egta brings you once again an innovative concept, this time from RTL Nederland, which wowed participants at our recent DigitalNext meeting. This week's egtabite builds upon the previous success of the *Wie is Tim* app and is a great example of the opportunities brought about by the digital transformation of broadcasting.

The background



RTL's *Goede Tijden, Slechte Tijden (GTST)*, 25 years after its first broadcast, is the longest running soap in the Netherlands. In 2012, in a first for the show, RTL developed an app for consumers to follow the story of one of the characters, Tim. Entitled *GTST: Wie is Tim?*, (Who is Tim?) the app was designed to maintain viewer engagement with the show during the

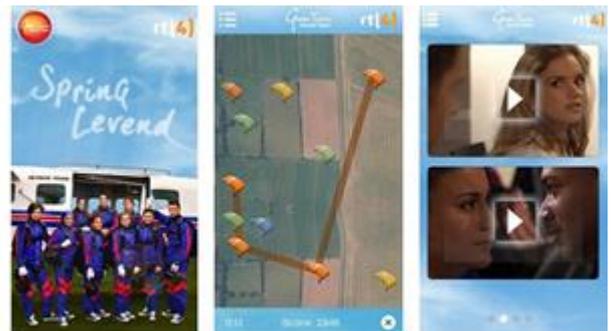
summer break. Following the success of this five-times national award-winning initiative, RTL collaborated with Endemol and The Project Factory to bridge the summer gap in 2013 with an innovative trans-media experience, a new app called *GTST: Spring Levend (Alive and Kicking)*.

As always, the season ended with a cliff-hanger in July 2013. This time, nine of the main characters were shown skydiving from a plane, and it soon became clear that one of the parachutes was sabotaged. Viewers saw the shocking crash landing of one of the characters, and the key question on everyone's lips was who survived the crash and – more importantly – who didn't?

How it worked

The app was essentially the main vehicle of this project and could be downloaded right after the cliff-hanger. The app featured content including exclusively scripted videos, voice messages and e-mails for eight weeks. Part of the content was locked and had to be retrieved by viewers playing games or entering special codes, some of which were found in other RTL programmes.

Through this approach a character who survived the jump was revealed every week on Sunday at 8:00 am, resulting in major media hype and fans even setting their alarm clocks to be the first to find out the new survivor's identity. Weekly items in the newspapers kept the buzz going, and the safe landing of a character was presented as major news on TV as well.



The huge buzz not only kept viewers involved in *GTST* but also gave advertisers the chance to build up an intense relationship with the consumers and contribute to the experience. While the fast food chain Subway had previously sponsored the show, now they became active in sponsoring the app. Subway stores gave away special codes for two weeks for customers to unlock content. The app itself mentioned how codes could be found at Subway and included an in-app store locator so people could get to their closest Subway quickly.

In order to thank those viewers who downloaded the app, RTL showed them the first episode of the new season a week before it premiered on TV. *GTST: Spring Levend* not only bridged the summer gap but also set up a powerful lead into the new TV season by answering the question: who did it?

The results

The app itself was downloaded over 500,000 times (representing one quarter of all viewers), had an average of 240,000 unique visitors per week and 17 million pageviews. For broadcasters, the main indicator of success is audience, and while the cliff-hanger show had 1.8 million viewers, following the summer buzz the first episode of the new season reached 2.25 million.

Good results consist not only of viewing numbers but also viewer engagement and discussions around the show. Analysis of search traffic for *GTST* over time shows that there was little such activity two years ago when there was no app available. There was a slight increase in the summer of 2012 with the *GTST: Wie is Tim?* app, and now with the introduction of the *GTST: Spring Levend* app, people looked up *GTST* more than during the actual airtime of the programme itself. This demonstrates that with a digital layer, a programme can still achieve the water-cooler effect even when it is not on air.

Why does this matter to egta members?

This new and innovative way of reaching viewers illustrates that even during the perceived slow summer break, a broadcaster can both keep fans engaged in the show and allow advertisers to benefit from new sponsorship opportunities by becoming part of the format. Key to success is effective use of all available media to engage multi-screen consumers.

Television and digital are more intertwined than ever, and while this does not mean that all formats should have digital layers, it does mean that adding digital – when relevant – can lead to a rise in viewing figures and retain fan engagement. When viewers are engaged with shows that offer an enriched experience, sponsors and advertisers also benefit from this increased attention.



What they said

We asked RTL Nederland for their comment on this initiative:



"GTST: Spring Levend, with its thrilling storyline and the seamless integration from TV to transmedia summer experience and back to TV, shows how a program and its digital layers have become fully intertwined and proves how a format can stay top-of-mind even during a summer break."

"We've just launched our new project to bridge the summer gap of 2014: the GTST Quiz App. With this app fans can test their knowledge about the popular soap series and challenge their friends. Within three weeks we accomplished 180,000 downloads and 3 million played games. The ultimate GTST fans will also battle against each other in the new summer TV show: The GTST TV Quiz. Together with our sponsors, we continue to develop cross media experiences for our fans; with an extra bonus when the fans themselves become part of the success."

— Annemarieke Loderus, Senior Development Manager, RTL Digital Media



Video

» Watch the video describing *GTST: Spring Levend* [here](#)



Background info

Please click on the links below to access the relevant documents:

- » *GTST* Website (please click [here](#))
- » Presentation by RTL Nederland from DigitalNext (for egta members only - you need to be logged in to access the file) (please click [here](#))