

RSM Outlook

SUMMER 2011

The Alumni and Corporate Relations Magazine of Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS



**MBA MASTERCLASS:
RADICAL INNOVATION**

**EXECUTIVE EDUCATION
FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGERS**

**BUILDING BRIDGES
THROUGH STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT**

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And you remain engaged with RSM in an enjoyable and significant way.

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Our experience indicates that one-on-one conversations with our Alumni are often the trigger for potential MBA participants to apply to RSM.



CONTACT

If you are willing to act as an RSM Alumni Ambassador, contact Denise Chasney-van Dijk, RSM Marketing & Admissions, at dchasney@rsm.nl



WHERE THE RSM MBA NEEDS YOUR EXPERTISE IN 2011:

- JUNE:** Lisbon, London, Madrid, Tel-Aviv
- JULY:** Bangalore, Bangkok, Beijing, Brussels, Jakarta, Moscow, Mumbai, New Delhi, Paris, Seoul, Shanghai, Taipei
- SEPTEMBER:** Bangkok, Beijing, Dublin, Jakarta, Lima, New York, Seoul, Shanghai, Taipei, Tokyo, Toronto, Washington
- OCTOBER:** Amsterdam, Eindhoven, Frankfurt, Istanbul, London, Madrid, Milan, Moscow, Munich, Paris, Rome, São Paulo, St. Petersburg, Tokyo
- NOVEMBER:** Athens, Dusseldorf, Tel-Aviv, Utrecht

Contents



14



16



18

MAIN FEATURE

SOCIAL MEDIA : STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

14 | The need to network

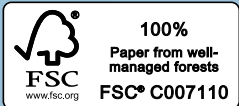
Before developing any strategy for social media, it is essential to understand the fundamentals of why it is humans need to connect and network with one another. Karen Stephenson, a corporate anthropologist, provides the insights.

16 | A little more conversation

For corporate communication expert Mignon van Halderen, the strength of social media is in the opportunities it gives companies to develop open dialogue with their many stakeholders.

18 | What's that buzz?

The social media revolution requires that traditional marketing models be revamped to cater for the demands of an online consumer-centric marketplace. So says, Cor Molenaar, Professor of eMarketing at RSM.



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20 | MBA masterclass

Visiting Professor Alan N. Hoffman discusses the evolution of strategy in global business and explains why forward-thinking organisations need to harness the power of radical innovation.

34 | Forces for change

Together, RSM and ERIM are spearheading COMPOSITE, a major research project that will provide a greater understanding of the effects of organisational change on the police forces of Europe.



38 | Recruitment partnerships

Yogen Singh of PwC believes that his firm is the best in the world at what it does. To maintain that position it must recruit only the best candidates and RSM, he says, is exactly the place to find them.

And more...

05 | Letter from the Dean

In his last letter to *RSM Outlook* readers, Dean George Yip bids a fond farewell to the school and reflects upon the lasting legacy he leaves behind.

07 | News from RSM

A round-up of the latest news and developments from the world of RSM.

24 | Executive briefing

EEOD faculty member, Patrick Lybaert, explores the essentials of leadership and why it is that managers should never stop learning.

26 | The challenges for Japan

Across the world, business eyes are fixed on Japan as the country recovers from disaster. But what challenges lie ahead?

28 | New ways of working

RSM researchers have helped a number of companies, including Microsoft, to get the best from their working environments. Prof. Eric van Heck explains how.

32 | HOPE for entrepreneurs

Encouraging people to start and grow their own businesses is essential for all economies, and this is exactly what the Holland Programme on Entrepreneurship (HOPE) seeks to do.

36 | The strategy of giving

Launched as a joint initiative between RSM and Erasmus School of Economics, the Erasmus Centre for Strategic Philanthropy (ECSP) explores how philanthropic organisations can perform strategically and efficiently.

40 | Greening RSM

Improving the environmental footprint of the school and inspiring students to conduct business in a sustainable way as they develop their careers is the mission of the Greening RSM movement.

42 | Making the connections

The Corporate and Alumni Relations department has the all-important task of keeping RSM's stakeholders engaged.

46 | Alumni interview

Meet Vincent Everts, an entrepreneur and trend-watcher known to many simply as 'Mr Gadget'.

48 | Events round-up

A review of recent events and forthcoming dates you won't want to miss.

LETTER FROM THE DEAN

“It is with mixed feelings that I approach this welcome letter, since it is also, for me, a farewell: it represents the last time I will be addressing readers of RSM Outlook as the Dean of Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University.”

The past four years have been exciting, rewarding, and – given that I was brought in to grow the school, and within my first year as Dean had to operate strategically in the worst financial crisis in 80 years – challenging, and occasionally turbulent. The good news is that RSM has successfully overcome any financial threats or losses, and is now poised for future growth.

In reflecting upon my ‘legacy’ to RSM – the achievements and activities that will continue to positively affect those involved in this extremely diverse organisation – some overall themes stand out, and I am proud to share these with you. They include:

Unite and Conquer:

- The implementation of a new business model that reduces our financial risk while encouraging a closer working relationship between the school’s two sides (B.V. and government funded);
- A revived, expanded, and more closely involved Advisory Board;
- Strong improvement in centralising and satisfying our alumni through better alumni relations, the role of alumni boards, and ongoing upgrade of alumni services;
- Marketing that has ‘centralised’ RSM’s internal and external image through the I WILL campaign and the School’s 4 Values – Critical Thinking, Sustainability, Innovation and Spirit;
- New events and publications that have strengthened RSM’s connection to the business world, its alumni, and its academics – the Leadership Summit, Journeys with Erasmus, and RSM Alumni Day are some examples, as is *RSM Insight magazine*;
- A restructuring of Executive Education and Organisational Development (EEOD) including the appointment of a new Executive Director, expanded and improved service lines, and increased collaboration between EEOD, top researchers, and corporate partners.



Strength Through Diversity:

- Promotion of women: four women are now Full Professors, as opposed to one when I came to RSM;
- The internationalisation of executive education to include joint ventures with partners in France, Portugal, Germany, Egypt, and Korea (adding to our previous relationships in Lebanon and Saudi Arabia).



Reputation, Research, and Raising of Funds:

- Increased media coverage and standing of RSM internationally; in part this derives from my ongoing presentations at Dean's conferences, such as AACSB and EFMD;
- A rise in most rankings, particularly in the FT meta ranking in which RSM is today listed within the top six schools in Europe;
- Excellent performance in academic research has now been broadened by the understanding that we must publish research that is relevant for managers;
- The creation of a Case Development Centre that showcases RSM's educational excellence internally and externally;
- Fundraising has taken a role of far greater importance. The RSM Annual Fund and the Major Gifts plan have been launched; more than €3 million has come to RSM and ERIM for research purposes, with several other agreements pending.

My term at RSM ends officially at the end of June. While I will be based primarily in London, where I will be able to spend more time with my family, I am very pleased to announce that I will join the top business school in China, China Europe International Business School (CEIBS) in Shanghai, on a part-time basis. At CEIBS I will be Co-Director of a new research centre on China innovation, funded by leading Dutch companies that include Philips and Akzo Nobel.

My official good-bye to RSM will take place on 21 June at a party attended by faculty and staff of the School; however, I look forward to continuing my relationship with this unique and prestigious business school in the future, and will always be grateful for my time here. The search for the next Dean is still ongoing. In the meantime, Professor Steef van de Velde, currently Vice Dean, will act as Interim Dean.

I would like to thank everyone at RSM for four full, collaborative, constructive, rewarding, and very enjoyable years.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'George Yip'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

George Yip
Dean

Rotterdam School of Management
Erasmus University

NEWS FROM RSM



RSM STUDENT WINS UN AWARD



RSM IBA student Kareem Chin joined more than 3,000 students from all over the world at Harvard University in Boston, USA, in February of this year for a prestigious, four-day Harvard National Model United Nations conference (HNMUN).

The conference simulates activities of UN bodies and other multilateral institutions at an academic level. Participants experience the challenges of international negotiation and multilateral diplomacy by representing an assigned country in various committees. Most students prepare themselves for several months before appearing on the HNMUN stage, including a six-month preparatory course in United Nations and Multilateral Diplomacy.

“The environment was competitive and challenging as well as co-operative,” reported Kareem. His committee (a simulation of NATO) encountered crises such as hostile actions of other states, insurgencies and regional instabilities, and a threat from Al Qaeda.

Thanks to the competencies learned at RSM, Kareem was awarded the Harvard Model UN first prize for being Best Delegate in his simulated NATO committee, deploying diplomatic and leadership skills, giving speeches and using rhetoric, charm and charisma through long stays of debates and negotiations.

BUSINESSES URGED TO BE MORE CREATIVE

Dutch organisations could achieve greater success by being more creative and entrepreneurial, said Justin Jensen in April during his inaugural address as Professor of Corporate Entrepreneurship. His address was entitled Corporate Entrepreneurship: Seizing Opportunities for a Prosperous Research Agenda.

“Currently, over 85 per cent of Dutch organisations focus on the improvement of existing products, services and processes, whereas only creative and entrepreneurial out-of-the-box ideas and initiatives really would drive organisations forward,” he said.

Professor Jansen drew the foundations and identified emergent opportunities for moving research forward by considering challenges associated with corporate entrepreneurship and describing important organisational and managerial features of successful organisations.

The integration of theory and research in strategic management and entrepreneurship with an increased focus on the role of middle management and on self-organising teams will generate valuable new research avenues, he said.

Corporate entrepreneurship – diversification through internal development – and the application of new knowledge has become increasingly important to keep Dutch companies competitive in an international context.

Jansen said: “If you look at what happens in China, the organisational context for corporate entrepreneurship seems much more favourable, so they constantly innovate and hence Dutch organisations find them more and more competitive. Obviously we have some very good examples of self-re-inventing corporations like DSM and Ten Cate – but we really need more of these!”

MBA GRADUATES CALLED UPON TO BE 'NEW LIGHT' IN LEADERSHIP

Leadership in a new world was the theme of the MBA graduation ceremony in March, when more than 200 MBA graduates accepted their degrees at the Beurs-World Trade Centre (WTC) Rotterdam. Master of Ceremonies was Professor Jaap Spronk, Academic Dean of MBA programmes.

Speaking at what was his last MBA graduation as RSM's Dean, Professor George Yip formally opened the ceremony by reminding the two graduating classes; the Executive MBA Class of 2010 and International Full-Time MBA Class of 2011, that Rotterdam was at the centre of the economic world, but there were still many places where new styles of leadership and management are needed. Dean Yip said he hoped the graduates would bring their 'new light' to those places.

In her address, Pauline van der Meer Mohr, President of the Executive Board of Erasmus University Rotterdam, extended this message to graduates by urging them to use their MBA drive as a force for good and make a difference in the world.

The ceremony created a 'first' for RSM with a high-spirited 'flashmob' interruption as graduates staged an unexpected dance routine for the benefit of the RSM Charity fund. A video of the performance can be seen on RSM's YouTube channel. Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb of Rotterdam concluded the ceremony by commending RSM and Erasmus University's contributions to the city and inducting the graduates as its honorary ambassadors.

WEB

www.youtube.com/lrsm Erasmus University

RSM RADIO BROADCASTS TO THE WORLD

The Executive Education and Organisational Development (EEOD) Department at RSM has launched an online radio station. It combines music with in-depth interviews from experts in business and executive education.

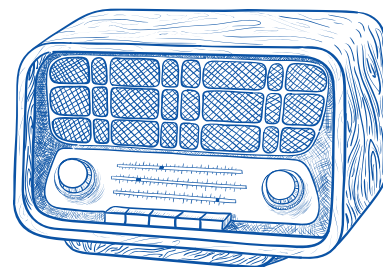
RSM Radio is available all over the world, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and is the brainchild of Klaas Wassens, Director of Open Programmes, and Hans Vollebregt, Manager Marketing & Sales Open Programmes. It offers two music stations – one pop, the other easy listening – and features 10-15 minutes of business discussion every hour.

The school's innovative internet radio station allows listeners to get a 'look behind the scenes' at the context, drivers, and personalities creating

RSM's top study programmes. Leading faculty members including Percy Heugens, Martijn van der Mandele, Stijn van Osselaer, Patrick Reinmoeller and Jan Vis have joined RSM Dean George Yip, Associate Dean MBA Programmes Dianne Bevelander, and Executive Director EEOD Josette de Goede in being among the first to deliver their expertise online.

"We aim for richer, deeper content - for example, longer interviews than is possible on commercial radio stations," says Hans Vollebregt.

You can tune into RSM Radio online by visiting www.rsm.nl/radio



INSCOPE RECOGNISES DUTCH STRENGTH FOR INNOVATION

The fifth annual survey of 11,000 Dutch companies by INSCOPE (a joint initiative of RSM, Maastricht University, TNO and University of Amsterdam), measured the innovative strength of the Dutch corporate world at the request of the Netherlands Centre for Social Innovation. The survey, the Erasmus Concurrentie & Innovatie Monitor, provides new insights into how management and organisational aspects contribute to sustainable organisational change.

The survey outcome shows that between 2009 and 2010, companies had a lesser focus on innovation, and

focused more on short-term results.

Fugro NV a company that collects and interprets data relating to the earth's surface for the benefit of governments and companies in the oil and gas, construction and mining industries - came out top, while Waste Treatment Technologies BV and Strukton Civil BV received honourable mentions.

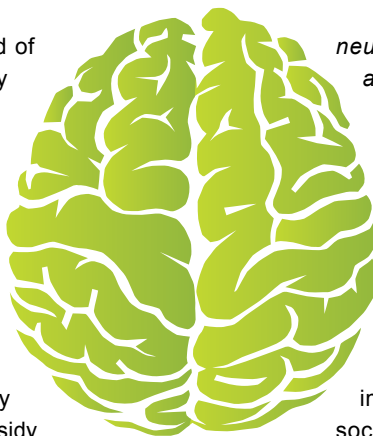
All set good examples of how companies can be both innovative and efficient, said the researchers, lead by Professors Henk Volberda and Justin Jansen of RSM.

WEB www.inscope.nl

RSM JOINS NEURO-STUDIES PROJECT

As a result of recent expansions in the field of neurosciences, RSM and Leiden University will lead a European project that will include the first empirical sociological study of the uptake of decision neurosciences by social sciences and the humanities. Ale Smidts, Professor of Marketing Research and Director of the Centre for Neuroeconomics at Erasmus University, Rotterdam and Paul Wouters, Professor of Scientometrics and Director of the Centre for Science and Technology Studies at Leiden University received a €210,000 'open research area' subsidy in February from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).

The European project is called *Neuro-turn in European Social Sciences and the Humanities: Impacts of*



neurosciences on economics, marketing and philosophy (NESSHI). Professor Wouters said: "For several years now, researchers in marketing and economics have performed experiments in partnership with brain imaging centres, while classic debates in the philosophy of mind are now discussed with references to the latest neurophysiological results published in *Nature* or *Science*. This will have deep impact on the social and legal fabric of society – witness the potential impact of neuroethics on criminal law, or the prospect of neuroeconomic policies to encourage saving or improve financial risk management. A thorough understanding of these transformations is therefore quite urgent."

iwill.rsm.nl

I WILL BE A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL FOR MY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Eric Bryant, American
Alumnus MBA10

Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University
The business school that thinks and lives in the future



APOLOGIES – WHAT ARE THEY WORTH?

A recent paper by RSM's Professor David De Cremer is drawing attention from media around the world after being published in the January 2011 edition of *Psychological Science*, the American journal of the Association for Psychological Science.

Bloomberg Businessweek, *Scientific American* and the *Financial Times* among others have picked up on the study.

Prof. De Cremer, who co-wrote the study with RSM Post-Doctoral Researcher Chris Reinders Folmer and Madan M. Pillutla of London Business School, says: "Financial institutions didn't want to apologise [in the aftermath of the financial crisis] because they didn't feel guilty, but, in the public's eye, they were certainly

guilty." However, even though some banks and CEOs did apologise, the public didn't seem to feel any better. "We wondered - what was the real value of an apology?"

De Cremer and his colleagues used an experiment to examine how people think about apologies. Their findings suggest that people are pretty poor forecasters when it comes down to resolving conflicts.

Although people may want an apology and thus rate it highly, the actual apology is less satisfying than expected. An apology is but a first step in the reconciliation process, they believe. "It is important people show that they will offer something more than just an apology,"



GETTING AHEAD OF THE JONESES



It is a well-observed fact that households at the bottom of the economic ladder spend a greater portion of their income on items that flaunt a wealthy image. It is a

phenomenon widely known as "keeping up with the Joneses". However, new research led by Nailya Ordabayeva from RSM's Department of Marketing Management shows that increasing wealth equality not only decreases bottom-tier consumers' envy of what other group members have – thus boosting their own satisfaction with what they have – but also raises possibility for them that they can get ahead of their neighbours.

In one study, the authors created a hypothetical situation where participants vied for status represented by the number of flowers in their front gardens. "We found that people with no flowers were less envious and happier with what they had when most of

their neighbours owned a similar moderate number of flowers and the gap with neighbours' gardens was not so apparent," said Ordabayeva.

"But the same happy people were more likely to spend money to beautify their garden when the gap was low. Thus, equality decreased envy but increased status spending. People do not only compete with the Joneses because they are envious," said Ordabayeva. "Sometimes people compete with the Joneses because it allows them to climb the social distribution in a cost-effective way."

The study appears in the June 2011 issue of The Journal of Consumer Research.

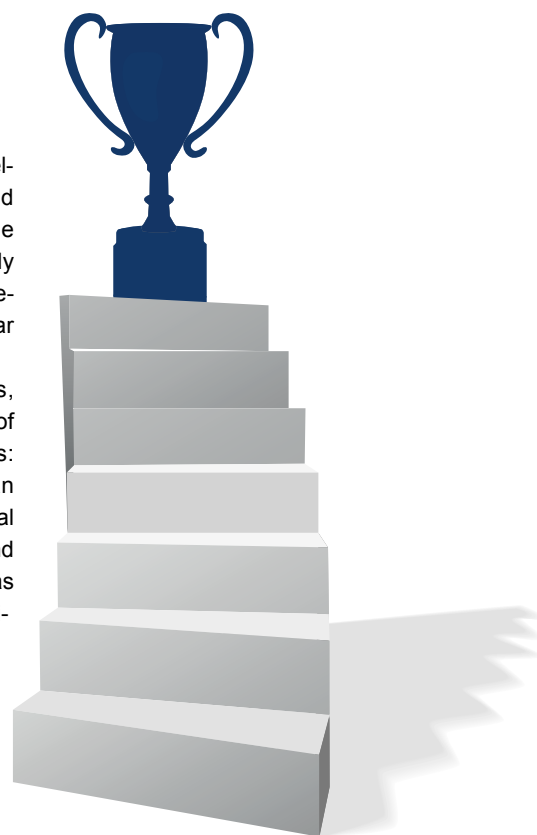
RSM IBA WINS QUALITY DISTINCTION

The Bachelor programme in International Business Administration (IBA) at RSM has been recognised for its international ambitions by the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation, NVAO. The award, for "Quality Distinction on Internationalisation", comes after a voluntary assessment procedure for programmes with distinct international ambitions.

RSM's IBA programme was highlighted as one of only two programmes to be close to 'excellent' in the evaluation with three 'excellent' scores and three 'good' scores on the six main criteria. The report indicates that RSM's IBA programme benefits from the school's worldwide network and its high academic standards for international business studies. RSM's multicultural setting was

particularly noted for resulting in an excellent "IBA-feeling" shared by students and staff. Moreover, the jury stated that: "The RSM IBA programme boasts a highly professional, well-functioning and appreciated mentoring programme with a clear focus on intercultural communication."

Commenting on these results, Professor Eric Waarts, RSM's Dean of Pre-experience programmes, says: "Preparing students for working in an increasingly globalised and multicultural working environment becomes more and more a necessity. This assessment was a very good exercise for us. While obviously there is room for improvement, we are very happy with this outcome. It makes the entire IBA team and myself feel very proud."



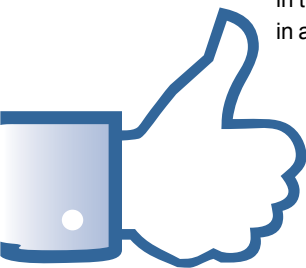
PHILIPS MAINTAINS TOP REPUTATION WITH 'EXCELLENT' SCORE

Philips is recognised as having the best reputation of the 30 largest companies in the Netherlands – for the fourth year in a row – according to an annual study by the Reputation Institute. Cees van Riel, Professor of Corporate Communication at RSM and co-founder of the Reputation Institute presented the prestigious award to Philips in April. Ahold, the international retailing group based in the Netherlands, climbed seven places in the ranking to take second spot. Another newcomer in the top three is Heineken.

The Reputation Institute examines companies in 35 countries and draws up the rankings using its own RepTrak model, which measures reputations by examining peoples' feelings and their

rational basis with respect to seven 'reputation drivers'; products and services, innovation, workplace, governance, citizenship, leadership and financial performance.

"The unique reputation score of Philips, above 80, is an interesting result. Only a few companies in the Netherlands have achieved this performance previously," said Cees van Riel. "Another remarkable result is the enormous increase of Ahold in the ranking. The accounting scandal at Ahold is apparently forgiven and forgotten. Ahold gains 6.5 points and ranks second after Philips," said Van Riel. "Managing its reputation has paid off at Ahold. If this growth continues, it will not surprise me if they lead the reputation ranking in the short term."



I WILL STIMULATE SOCIAL
INNOVATION TO IMPROVE THE
DUTCH ECONOMY

Henk Volberda / Professor of Strategic Management

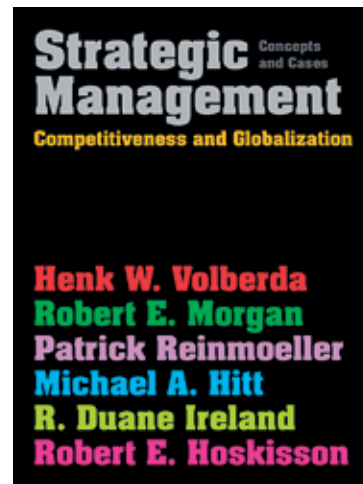
LANDMARK STRATEGY HANDBOOK

RSM's Henk W. Volberda, Professor of Strategic Management and Business Policy, and Patrick Reinmoeller, Associate Professor of Strategic Management, have joined with leading researchers Robert E. Morgan, Michael A. Hitt, R. Duane Ireland and Robert E. Hoskisson to develop a truly landmark strategic management textbook that is ideally suited for courses in Europe, the Middle East and Africa as well as other global markets.

With a new process perspective to supplement the text's trademark integrated approach, *Strategic Management: Competitiveness and Globalization* provides the most comprehensive and thorough coverage of

strategic management now available in the market.

Heralded as the best handbook for the next generations of business managers around the world, this new strategy text maintains the strengths and hallmark features of the original work and has been specially prepared to match the modern EMEA curriculum with boosted coverage of: implementation issues; analysis of how firms use strategic management tools; techniques and concepts. It also provides a balanced emphasis on economics and resource-based perspectives and expanded coverage of comparative governance and organisational renewal.



Strategic Management: Concepts and Cases: Competitiveness and Globalization

ISBN-13: 9781408019184

RSM ENGAGES WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

RSM is noted for its diversity. But with a broad-based community of alumni, faculty, staff and students (and potential students) in more than 80 countries, engagement can be tricky. To help, RSM is making extra efforts in its use of social media.

"We want to keep everyone up-to-date with activities and connected to RSM's culture and spirit," says Maron Zewdie, Marketing & PR Co-ordinator, who has been charged with wrangling RSM's proliferating English-language social network profiles (including LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube and Facebook).

As examples, the RSM Annual Fund profile on Facebook enables even distant alumni to see what they are



supporting with donations, whilst posting photos of the RSM Marathon Team (who ran to support the Annual Fund in April) or of trek leader Rebecca Stephens at a fundraiser for the RSM MBA Kilimanjaro Project gives a concrete quality to the school's many fundraising objectives.

Even the limited word-count of Twitter has been put to creative use with a 'Thinktweet'; a virtual think-tank that allows brain-storming in the lead-up to a round-table discussion.

YouTube, however, may be the greatest aid in engaging the emotions of the RSM community. The MBA11/EMBA10 graduation in March is a good example.

The YouTube video of the flash mob that stormed the graduation during the presentation of the Class Gift to the RSM International Charity Foundation has gotten the lion's share of the attention and to-date has logged over 3,000 views.

For more information, see RSM Social: www.rsm.nl/social

MAKING SENSE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

An audience of distinguished guests, faculty members, alumni, students and members of the public gathered at RSM on April 1st as Professor Gail Whiteman officially accepted the position of Ecorys NEI Professor of Sustainability and Climate Change.

Her inaugural address was a powerful and thought-provoking lecture entitled 'Making Sense of Climate Change: How to Avoid the Next Big Flood', in which she urged businesses to increase their efforts to assimilate knowledge from natural scientists and local experts in order to prepare business for the effects of climate change. In keeping with the sustainability theme, the hall was decorated with

surplus florist's flowers, each tagged with a message about Erasmus University's '25,000 Acts of Green' campaign for April's global Earth Day event.

The reception buffet was locally sourced, sustainably produced, and served on tables made up of stacked wooden transport pallets. Student volunteers collected litter and waste from around the campus in the morning to create a good impression for distinguished visitors, and this was later made into artworks. Professor Whiteman's clothes and gown were made of sustainably-sourced 'Returnity fibres', making it the first eco-toga for RSM.



iwill.rsm.nl

I WILL BRIDGE EAST AND WEST

Chenchen Zhu, Dutch
MSc student

Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University
The business school that thinks and lives in the future



CONNECTING AS A CULTURAL IMPERATIVE

Our fundamental need as human beings to communicate and network is fuelling the wildfire spread of social media. But why do we need to connect and what part does technology really play? **Text** Karen Stephenson

By both collecting and connecting through Twitter, Facebook and the many other social media channels now available, we are at the crossroads of a cultural revolution. There is so much noise in connecting – tap, tap, tap – that sometimes we lose sight of its real appeal and the true signal of the social imperative, which is – trust, trust and trust.

A long time ago in a world far away, the earth wasn't so crowded. The airways were pierced by the sounds of 'tom-toms' tapping out staccato missives to distant tribes and relatives. Today, we poke each other with staccato texts and

massive and ubiquitous virtual connection. It is a disruptive change of the first order in the social order – that is widely impacting the world order.

Evolution and revolution

Consider this. From the 1st Century BC, the Silk Road was a constantly changing network of land and sea routes connecting disparate cultures through the migratory movement of people trading with each other. In the 21st Century AD, the internet is a constantly changing network and it too connects disparate cultures through migrations – only this time it is the migration of ideas and information.

“As astounding as advances in technological and informational mobility are, they are a catalyst, not a driver of connection.”

tweets and the more melodious versions of 'tom-toms' – ring tones. What has changed between then and now is the order of magnitude of connecting brought about by a revolution in technology, and an evolution in human culture.

We literally and figuratively live in a MilkyWay of possible connections that morph from the spoken word, to the written word, to the tweet. Now, with a wave of a hand, we can mobilise our virtual selves and infect our messages with the memes of cultural contagion. A strange new world of cloud computing hovers over us: there is no historical precedent for this type of

When technology was more limited, people were mobile. But as technology evolved, information enabled people to sweep their virtual selves, their avatars, across continents in the twinkling of an eye. That profound fact is the greatest evolutionary insight for me.

People are driven to connect with each other – whether it is by being physically mobile or through mobilising their information and ideas or both. And mobility is the servant of connecting. Human connection is an ancient primordial drive and provides the source of human culture.

I WILL ALWAYS LEAD
BY EXAMPLE

Jose Alfredo Cruz / OEMS Student



When we juxtapose intervals of history such as the 1st Century BC with the 21st Century AD, as we did a moment ago, it is a relatively obvious comparison. So let's only consider the last 100 years. If one looks at the march of industrialisation, we see long Cartesian rows of sewing machines, typewriters, printers, presses and assembly lines. In this world (and it is still with us today), the machine or the technology was fixed and humans were tethered to it.

True mobility began with the personal computer or laptop, but WIFI and the tiny catching devices like PDAs emancipated humans from being physically leashed. Virtual connection is now for many a necessary, but still not sufficient condition, because people will 'Foursquare'¹ to meet up with colleagues the 'old-fashioned' way – face2face.

Trust and technology

As astounding as our many advances in technological and informational mobility are, they are a catalyst, not a driver of connection. The most primal form of connection is still homophily – you look

like me, you think like me, you talk like me – you are one of us, therefore I trust you. This is the principle of like seeking like. Similarity has been variously defined through the ages, but its most ancient form is determined by three powerful senses: sight, sound and smell. The only way to use those senses is to be physically proximate.

Research shows that it is not the tweets, but twitches, the thousands of tiny facial movements that feed our subconscious. Our brain processes these micro messages and automatically formulates decisions and opinions ranging from expert judgement to stereotyping.

Consider this experiment. We have two teams: 1), TEAM A consists of 10 people who do not trust one another but are put in the same room with the latest technology to solve a complex problem; 2), TEAM B consists of 10 people who do trust one another but are scattered to the four corners of the earth and have sub-optimal technology to solve a complex problem. In repeated experiments, where the trust is maintained, TEAM B consistently outperforms TEAM A.

One can sensibly conclude therefore, that superior performance is facilitated by trusted connections among team members, not technology.

The take-away lesson from this little example is: trust-based connections will trump technology-based connections any day of the week. Why? Because trust is still the ultimate form of connection. A trusted connection will enslave any new technology, despite the love affair we have with the latest gadget that emerges into the market.

As fast as the speed of light is in connecting us, and despite advances in sexy new forms of technology to facilitate that connection, we remain profoundly and primordially connected by – and at – the speed of trust. ■

¹ Foursquare is a location-based social networking application for mobile devices.

Karen Stephenson, a Corporate Anthropologist and acknowledged expert on social networking, is Associate Professor at RSM and President of Netform, Inc.

WEB www.drkaren.us (research) and

WEB www.netform.com (business)

A LITTLE MORE CONVERSATION

There is much debate about how organisations can best harness the power of social media. For Mignon van Halderen, its strength lies with the opportunity it gives companies to engage in conversation with their stakeholders.

Text Russell Gilbert

The dialogue between companies and stakeholders has taken on a new dimension of importance in recent years, particularly as our networked and interconnected societies have become more aware, concerned, and inquisitive about the issues that affect them. What stakeholders expect from organisations is engagement in public discussion. What's more, they want organisations to not just listen to their concerns, but to explain their perspectives and stance on whatever these issues may be.

"For many companies the big issues are very much social ones – climate change, energy efficiency and human rights, for example," says Mignon van Halderen, Assistant Professor of Corporate Communication at RSM's Corporate Communication Centre.

ExxonMobil - a company that for years had ignored the public debate going on around it about climate change – realised the potential of social media and began blogging. A reflection of how important they consider this open dialogue is the fact that the blog is fronted by the company's vice president of public and government affairs, who personally expresses the company's viewpoint on matters that are of serious concern to stakeholders (www.exxonmobilperspectives.com).

But why – where is the value in this? Van Halderen explains: "Because of the way society

works today, companies can only keep their licence to operate if they are responsive to the concerns of stakeholders, especially as non-governmental organisations and institutional investors become more powerful and have opinions that carry greater weight."

Social media, she asserts, is a powerful way of building conversations between companies and diverse groups of stakeholders, and companies should use it as means to improve and leverage their corporate reputation. "Social media is unique in that it allows companies to tell their own side of the story rather than have others – usually those with antagonistic perspectives – do the talking for them," she says.

Developing a social media strategy

In the education programmes run by the Corporate Communication Centre, Van Halderen notes that, increasingly, managers are asking how their organisation should go



► Mignon van Halderen

Mignon van Halderen is Assistant Professor of Corporate Communication with RSM's Corporate Communication Centre. The centre conducts scientific and applied research for the business community and offers a wide range of courses.

WEB www.rsm.nl/cc

about including social media in their communications strategies.

“Too many companies think a social media strategy means all they have to do is get themselves on to Facebook and Twitter and start saying things they presume people want to hear,” she says. “That is blindly following the social media hype. It is absolutely essential that managers at the top of organisations have a clear idea of how they want to position the company, what key messages they want to get across and in what kind of style.”

Van Halderen distinguishes four types of social media approaches, which can be categorised along two dimensions common to reputation management: “The first is whether the social media strategy is focused on *Opportunity* or *Risk Aversion*. The second dimension is whether the company is to be *Proactive* or *Reactive*. Combining the two gives four different approaches.”

When making the transition from a reactive-risk aversion approach to a proactive-opportunity focus, Van Halderen believes that many organisations struggle because they feel uncomfortable with the transparency of social media. “Taking a proactive approach to the potential reputation management risks of social media is a learning curve, one that some companies handle better than others,” she says.

One company often cited as offering an example of best practice in social media communications is Kodak. The company has numerous blogs and multiple profiles on channels such as Facebook, Flickr, YouTube and Twitter.

“Their presence has a consistent look and feel about it – regardless of which channel you are on, which is important for identity projection purposes,” she says. “They have put together an impressive

policy handbook, one that provides clear guidelines for employees and also explains very clearly the thinking behind their social media strategy. Kodak have even made it freely available for the public to download, which is a great move and shows that they are forerunners in the strategic use of social media.”

Such an open attitude helps reinforce organisational understanding of what is perhaps the greatest revelation concerning social media – that communications between organisations and the outside world are no longer essentially one way.

Aside from a well-formulated social media strategy, “Companies would do well not to underestimate the power of tone of voice,” she says. “Nestlé learned this to their cost when a public outcry developed over their use of palm oils. Claims were disseminated on YouTube by Greenpeace that the production of it caused deforestation in Indonesia and thus endangered Orang-utans.”

Amid cries of “Kit Kat Killers” and “Give orang-utans a break”, Nestle responded aggressively, demanding the video be removed and, astonishingly, verbally

“Companies should use social media as means to improve and leverage their corporate reputation.”

Five point plan for developing a social media strategy.

1. **Assess your reputation goals. Once defined, see how social media can help you reach those goals and which channels can do so specifically.**
2. **Make sure you have clear guidelines in place for all employees that identify and explain the organisation's goals, standards and expectations, and the reasons behind them.**
3. **Understand that a shared voice is best when communicating through social media. This means developing one collective personality organisation-wide and using one tone of voice in all conversations.**
4. **Adapt a conversational mindset. You cannot have a conversation if you are not listening to the other person.**
5. **Empower your employees to use social media. Give them the tools and procedures to do so.**

attacking people who had expressed their concerns on the company's Facebook page. It was a public relations disaster for Nestlé and a resounding triumph for the Greenpeace campaign.

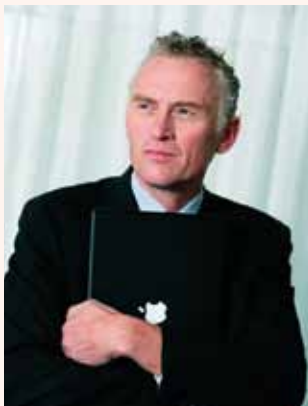
“Taking a defensive stance and using an aggressive tone of voice when dealing with stakeholder concerns is a big mistake,” Van Halderen warns.

Once upon a time corporate communications were primarily about expressing organisational perspectives outwardly. But with social media, exactly as with conversations in every day life, the secret is in knowing how to listen – and responding to what people are saying both directly to you and about you in a way that develops real engagement among your stakeholders. “This,” says Van Halderen, “is the true strength of social media that companies should be looking to leverage.” ■

WHAT'S THAT BUZZ?

Cor Molenaar, Professor of eMarketing at RSM, and Michel Schaeffer, bol.com's marketing director, explain how the social media revolution requires that traditional business and marketing models be revamped to cater for the demands of an online consumer-centric marketplace.

Text Joe Figueiredo



► **Cor Molenaar**

Professor of eMarketing at RSM and author of the best-selling book *Shopping 3.0*.

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The Facebook and Twitter generation was born out of a love and need to interact, and an ever-increasing desire to tell, listen, discover, opine and discuss. With the proliferation of mobile devices and wireless technologies, it is now possible to do all of this from anywhere, at any time.

Sociologically, the demographics of age, gender, social class, culture and geography that once linked us together as a group are becoming less relevant, instead being replaced by commonality of interests, tastes, needs, opinions and affiliations, explains Prof. Molenaar, author of several books on eMarketing. "This reflects a desire to be looked upon, first and foremost, as individuals, while also belonging to a group of like-minded people."

A new type of knowledgeable customer and demand-driven market is the result, says Molenaar, where the customer – not the supplier or product – takes centre stage, and where the supplier no longer controls sales channels, but merely monitors them.

According to Molenaar, buying behaviour is also changing. Customers now research a product online and then decide on a retailer and sales channel, based on such criteria as price and convenience.

This new market demands new marketing strategies – and companies are rapidly complying. "Customer groups based on shared values are now being targeted," says Molenaar, "and businesses are increasingly deploying social media to spread their marketing message. They do this in the expectation that

readers – potential viral-marketing agents, in fact – will share the good word with their like-minded peers, who it is hoped will find it more acceptable and trustworthy than if it came directly from a company."

A case in point is bol.com, which last year came first, for the second time, on the list of the top-100 brands in the Netherlands actively involved in social media – and for good reason.

The company, the Netherlands' fastest growing online retailer for media products – with three million loyal customers and revenues of €318 million in 2010 – not only has a presence in all major social media networks and blogs in the country, but has many more customers and 'fans' engaged its marketing activities than its competitors, reports Michel Schaeffer, bol.com's marketing director, a recent recipient of the Direct Marketing Man of the Year Award and a graduate of RSM's full-time Bedrijfswetenschappen programme (1993).

"There is a noticeable shift in the marketing focus away from the product and the 'four Ps' (product, price, place and promotion) and towards the customer. Crucially, customers are now being addressed as individuals with their own needs, and marketing is being creatively tailored to meet their requirements," he says. Customers are also getting involved in more and more business processes and activities.

Innovative and creative

Social media marketing is getting creative, comments Molenaar. For example, Groupon, an online-coupon company, offers daily deals to registered consumers at large discounts, provided the offer attracts a minimum number of buyers. Customers then use email and social media to spread the news to family and friends in the hope that they will participate in the deal and ensure this minimum number is met. Thanks to such attractive offers, participating businesses increase their exposure and sales, for which they pay Groupon a



► **Michel Schaeffer**

Marketing Director of bol.com and graduate of RSM's Bedrijfswetenschappen programme, 1993.



commission. It is what might be called a win-win-win proposition.

Bol.com offers something similar with its 'Daily Deal' promotion, says Schaeffer. Even more innovative is its online 'Steal the Show' competition (<http://www.bol.com/nl/m/muziek/mini-music-steeldeshow/index.html>), which it launched together with recording companies and artists. "We actively engage our younger fans and customers," he says. "What's amazing is that the artists themselves use social networking to interact with contestants and attract traffic to our site."

And with social media evolving so quickly, bol.com is working hard to keep up with new demands. "We are implementing the Facebook 'I Like' function on our website," enthuses Schaeffer. "The idea is to increase brand and product exposure on the social networking site, and stimulate curiosity."

Ear to the ground

Of course, social media also brings challenges: most notably, that it is now

the customer who is in control, not the retailer, Molenaar observes. In response to this, businesses involved in social media marketing need to continually monitor what is being said about them, and react

“Businesses are increasingly deploying social media to spread their marketing messages.

Professor Cor Molenaar.

immediately to accentuate the positive and play down the negative, or face the risk that "things could really get out of hand and cause immense damage to their brand," he warns.

Bol.com is ahead of the curve in that respect. "We use sophisticated software to monitor all major blogs and social networks, such as Twitter, for any mention of our company," says Schaeffer. "Equally important, we react immediately to any negative posts with apologies and offers

of help, and to positive ones with a note of thanks or encouragement."

The company also monitors and analyses responses and resulting purchases online, which can indicate how successful a marketing campaign has been by its number of respondents and sales, he says.

According to Molenaar, online market monitoring and research can also be used to discover market trends, identify new target groups and generate sales. "Take online retailer Amazon, they analyse recent navigational and transactional data to make product recommendations to their customers," he says. "In my personal experience they have been spot on in their recommendations of books I should purchase."

Of course, we have not yet seen the back of this eMarketing revolution. With the advance in technology, consumers now have a choice of several platforms

– PC, laptop, tablet or smart phone – to connect to the internet, run applications and access their 'cloud' data, says Molenaar. This means more location-based services for customers on the move. And with companies like GroupMe slipping into the mainstream, which offer group text-messaging and calling to every phone, we can expect even more social interaction – as well as ever more creative initiatives from savvy social media marketers. ■

RADICAL INNOVATION ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

Management strategy has evolved considerably over the decades since it first came to prominence in 1962, courtesy of Alfred D. Chandler's groundbreaking book *Strategy and Structure*. Business has globalised significantly since then and strategy along with it. Now the focus for forward-thinking organisations is on harnessing the power of radical innovation. **Text** Russell Gilbert

Management commentators with their finger on the pulse today view radical innovation as an important means through which strategic and commercial success can be achieved.

Gary Hamel, author of *Leading the Revolution* and ranked by the *Wall Street Journal* as the world's most influential business thinker, preaches exactly this: that the road to success in the global economy is not through the development of high-quality products and lean organisational structures that minimise costs alone (these should be taken as essentials, he says). Instead it is to be found through the development of product and service offerings that blaze trails and open new markets that previously never existed.

It's a view shared by Alan N. Hoffman, Professor of Management at Bentley University in Massachusetts, USA, and Visiting Professor of Global Strategy on RSM's Global Executive OneMBA programme.

But what is radical innovation, who is leading the way, and why is it so essential? Prof. Hoffman explains: "Southwest Airlines along with European carriers Ryanair and easyJet can be seen as radical innovators. Collectively they have redefined air travel by making it affordable and therefore accessible to more people than ever before."

Dutch electronics company Philips, RIM (the creator of the Blackberry) and eBay can also be held up, he believes, as glowing examples of organisations that have achieved great success because of their ability to think, see and do things differently from the herd. "Apple, with its iPod, iPhone and iPad offerings are undoubtedly the masters of radical innovation," he says. "Through it, Apple has inspired millions to purchase their products and have created a brand loyalty competitors can only dream of. Now that's strategy."

The dawn of strategy

Eager to put strategy and its development into context, Prof. Hoffman explains that, as we understand it today, strategy has its roots in the great regeneration of Europe and Japan that began with the end of World War II – and importantly, he points out, is intrinsically linked with the post-war American economy.

"In the post-war era many of the executives leading America's biggest firms were former military officers who knew very little about corporate business," he explains. "Their strategy was geared towards the objectives of achieving low-cost production and maximum profit. Rather than use their profits to offer lower prices for the benefit of the consumer, the contents of company treasure chests were poured into advertising, bonuses and share dividends."

Hoffmann points a finger at America's automotive industry: "In its heyday, the autos made by General Motors and others were not particularly brilliant and it was heavy advertising that drove consumer uptake. Whilst European companies such as Daimler-Benz and BMW were innovating, US auto manufacturers and, in fact, most of corporate America, fell in love with the alchemic abilities of 'Madison



A year later and there is a stock market crash, a significant event in more ways than one. “The ‘Black Monday’ of 19th October 1987 brings about the long overdue extinction of the dinosaurs that roamed corporate America,” he says. “They were replaced by a new generation of managers who had evolved with technology, R&D and modernisation in their DNA.”

Eager to draw attention to the bigger picture, he takes pains to point out that something of

“ The world hasn’t seen much in the way of radical innovation from modern-day China or other developing countries, yet.”

greater significance happened almost a decade prior. In fact, it was a monumental event that started a revolution: one that changed our lives immeasurably and today continues to redefine our world. For Hoffman, its genesis can be pinpointed exactly: “It all began in the year 1976, in the garage of a college dropout named Steve Jobs.”

Avenue’, the geographical and spiritual home of America’s burgeoning advertising industry, to turn the base metal of their products into gold that could be distributed as rewards to the captains of industry and shareholders alike.”

This was the prevalent strategy throughout America’s boardrooms at the time and, because of it, the USA became the world’s economic superpower in the decades that followed. “However,” Hoffman points out, “by the 1980s, it became very clear that the age of profiteering was over. The American economy faltered to such a degree as a result that, in 1986, it was the worst performing in the world. At the same time as the USA is in decline, Japan’s economic star is in ascendancy as a result of their own global strategies, which enabled them to leverage economies of scale in manufacturing and as a result offer high quality products at lower prices.”

The revolution begins

Whilst the blossoming Apple did not invent the PC, theirs was the first company that offered for sale a commercial personal computer that could sit on a desktop at a cost of less than US\$5,000. Hoffman enthusiastically asserts that: “In many respects this event sows the seeds of resurgence for the new American economy, although it would take more than a decade for the nascent personal computer industry to really come to life.”

Although Jobs and partner Steve Wozniak might have thought they had a business idea with some potential when selling their homemade Apple I, they instead created a global personal computer industry, one that spawned companies such as Lotus, Sun Microsystems, Intel, Oracle, Cisco – and ultimately gave Microsoft the opportunity to dominate with its Windows operating system. ▶

I WILL HAVE IDEAS WORTH
SPREADING

John Binay / Swiss / MSc Student



“The seeds of radical innovation are germinated in the hot houses of the university systems of developed nations.”

“The synchronicity was perfect,” says Hoffman. “The proliferation of PCs helped stimulate the rapid growth of the internet. The innovation revolution had begun and out of it came the next great wave of radical innovators, among them companies such as Google, eBay, YouTube and Facebook.”

From being one of the worst performing economies in the mid-80s, the USA reinvented itself to become a world leader in radical innovation. But where did this new-found view of the world come from, and how were those with the innovative ideas, and the vision of how these could be used, able to turn their dreams into reality?

Prof. Hoffman is adamant that it all begins with the education system, not just in America, but in Europe and the developed world as a whole. “It is very easy to argue that global strategy starts with the education system. The seeds of radical innovation are germinated in the hot houses of the university systems of developed nations. Here, new ideas along with R&D are actively encouraged. It’s really quite straightforward. This is the reason why developed countries are the hottest at radical innovation.”

To exemplify this, Prof. Hoffman points to the Middle East. “Very few patents were filed in the Arab world last year. Why? Because there isn’t a proper university infrastructure in place, although we do see this being addressed slowly but surely.” Hoffman cites the creation of the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology in Saudi Arabia, which was set up in 2009. It has laid out a mission to be at the cutting edge of science and technology by 2020. “In the Middle East they know it’s no longer oil but innovation that represents the future, particularly in science and technology,” he says.

That’s not to say that developing countries are not investing in education or innovation. Hoffman explains that China has set up four R&D centres around the world, one of which is in Europe: “This is a country that not only understands the importance of R&D, but also realises it needs to be done on a global basis. However, the world hasn’t seen much in the way of radical innovation from modern-day China or other developing countries, yet.”

Making innovation happen

If radical innovation is at heart about fostering the right environment, then why do we not see more of it from the developed world? “It’s a good question,” concedes Hoffman. “In business, the people responsible for the development of corporate strategies are the managers at the top and they are very well paid. Senior managers too often don’t want to set the world on fire – they’ve already done well for themselves and so are strongly motivated to maintain the status quo. Radical innovation is as much about internal motivation as it is about R&D. It’s about being at the top of your game and still having the drive to want to throw out the rule book and think something new.”

Another problem, believes Hoffman, is that as they get older, senior managers lose touch with whatever creative abilities they might have had. “Finding they lack the imagination and creativity to radically innovate, what do top teams do? They hire management consultants,”

he says. “Steve Jobs doesn’t hire management consultants to tell him what to invent next! At Apple, the average age of the people who built the first Macintosh was about 21. In other words, you have to hire young people. You have to tap into their creativity and imagination, both inside and outside the organisation. That’s how you get radical innovation.”

The innovation pipeline

The iPhone exudes radical innovation, he believes. “But it’s also much more than that: it’s a great product and is built to very high standards. It is so superior that Apple hardly needs to make any modifications to it all from market-to-market, country-to-country. It’s easy to see why, with such a product, Apple has been able to conquer the world.”

But, surely such success requires more than just manufacturing to high standards? Otherwise we’d be awash with world-beating products. Hoffman agrees. “Look at RIM – they were years ahead of their time with the Blackberry,” he says. “Now though they’re losing ground. Instead of hitting the market with something equally as radical, they have fallen back to making small improvements. This is merely incremental innovation, not radical innovation. That makes RIM rather like a one-trick pony. Motorola and their RAZR mobile phone serve as another example of a company that relied for too long on a single radical innovation and failed to repeat its success.”

To succeed in the longer-term, Hoffman stresses that ambitious companies need to have innovation pipelines. “Pharmaceutical companies understand this very well. Apple understands this too as can be seen from its continual development of great products that really grab the markets: from iMacs and iPods evolved iPhones and iPads. Next it’s Apple TV. They have

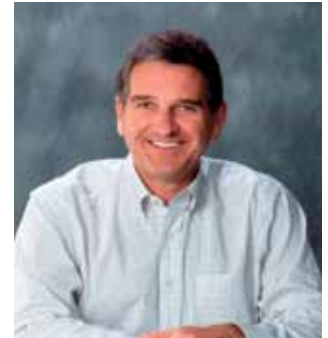
a continual pipeline of innovation that not just shakes up markets but also invents them.”

Hoffman is enthusiastic about the role of leaders in creating the new and the never-before seen. “In some respects, when you get right down to it, the ability to rethink existing ideas and to create totally new ones is not the product of companies. Rather, it is the product of individuals. All the great companies that have imagined the future and set about creating it are the ones that have, at their heart, forward-thinking leaders with powerful ideas and who are not prepared to accept the status quo.”

It’s about vision, he stresses. “In business, vision is the ability to see the products and services of the future that no one else has yet dreamt of. Xerox, for example, invented the Graphical User Interface (GUI) and the computer mouse before Apple, but they lacked the vision to apply their ideas in a meaningful way and failed to market a single product that incorporated the features that others would later use to change the world.”

Of course, the individuals we hold high as the gurus of radical innovation today aren’t working in isolation. To be radically innovative, people need at their disposal a rich pool of talent that has the knowledge, skills and capabilities to understand the dream and help build the reality.

“When you have creative thinkers within a company,” concludes Hoffman, “one with the desire and the vision to turn dreams into reality, then you have a great global strategy, and with it you can change the world.” ■



► **Alan N. Hoffman** is a Professor of Management at Bentley University and visiting Professor of Strategic Management in the Global Executive OneMBA Programme at RSM where he teaches Global Strategy. His major areas of interest include strategic management, global strategy, investment management and technology. He is co-author of *The Strategic Management Casebook* and *Skill Builder* textbook.

WEB <https://faculty.bentley.edu/details.asp?uname=ahoffman>

The Global Executive OneMBA is designed for senior executives and professionals. It is the only Executive MBA programme developed with equal input from five premier business schools located in Asia, Europe, North and South America.

WEB www.rsm.nl/onemba

THE MAKING OF GOOD MANAGERS

The best managers are those who develop leadership abilities in themselves and in others says Patrick Lybaert, visiting faculty member at RSM's Executive Education & Organisational Development department (EEOD) and leadership-development consultant with the Executive Leadership Foundation he established. **Text** Joe Figueiredo

Lybaert was once baffled by a CEO he met at a conference who proudly confessed to spending hours responding to questions from sales managers with pages of detailed expert advice. Why would the head of a large company, he wondered, who should be concerned with the bigger strategic picture, be spending so much time on operational matters – the domain and responsibility of the sales department?

And what of the managers who make decisions and review their outcome, but never the decision process? They chair meetings, but never ask the participants at the end of the meeting to evaluate how the meeting went. Acting as if the end justifies the means, these managers fail to find fundamental faults with a 'process', and continue to make the same mistakes.

Still other managers feel the need to carry their Blackberries everywhere they go. No wonder they feel overwhelmed – and ironically scarcely have the time for what is crucial. Is it reasonable to surmise then, that many managers are lacking leadership?

Full-body leadership

Lybaert begins by clarifying terminologies. A manager is a function, he explains, whereas a leader is the embodiment of a set of attributes we strive to achieve, and which could be applied to any function.

“Leadership means creating the right conditions and environment to encourage others to grow, develop and achieve,” says Lybaert. “A leader also strives to become a better person.” And perhaps most notably, he says, a good manager is also a leader. Lybaert identifies five subtypes of leadership (or management):

- *Leading by the head:* where managers provide focus, engage the workplace in strategic dialogues and motivate people into recognising market signals while stimulating creativity and change.
- *Leading by the feet:* where managers translate strategy into an operating plan; an objective into an action plan; and have the discipline and flexibility to execute it, thereby constantly challenging processes and systems.
- *Leading by the heart:* where managers foster passion, pride and inspiration, thus driving the company's mission, vision and values.
- *Leading by the hands:* where managers effectively improve and measure people's performance, while empowering them to improve in the future.
- *Leading by the guts:* where a manager exemplifies a leader's personal strengths, authentic vision, values and goals, and has the courage to do difficult things and set an example.

The wrong baggage

Leadership is what enables managers to guide, delegate, inspire, motivate and trust, says Lybaert. Managers who lack these capabilities typically involve themselves in what is not their work, especially when they cannot deal with new technologies and methods. “In this situation they suddenly feel inferior and distrust their subordinates,” Lybaert explains. “The fear of losing control leads them to frantically attempt to achieve something concrete, in the hope it will save them from drowning.”



► Patrick Lybaert

Organisational psychologist by training and management consultant by profession, Patrick Lybaert combines the scientific with the practical in the RSM EEOD programme he teaches on the Essentials of Leadership.



Not only are these managers being inefficient and ineffective by immersing themselves in minutiae, they are also undermining the authority of their subordinates and showing distrust. "Somebody once said, when trust increases, things are achieved quicker and at a lower cost," says Lybaert.

But how can so many managers lack such essential skills? In the current business culture, says Lybaert, managers are appointed on the basis of their prior achievements, not their managerial and leadership skills. This problem usually appears when they first become managers. "If first-time managers do not lose this results-driven mentality and start learning to act as managers and showing leadership, they are going to carry this unwanted 'baggage' with them as they progress up the management ladder," he warns.

Time is another issue. Lybaert spends his time continuously reminding executives of business guru Peter Drucker's

advice on time management: distinguish between what is urgent and what is important. Discriminate and prioritise.

"Managers should spend 60-80 per cent of their time dealing with important issues. Typically, they should make time for strategic dialogues with their people on such matters as self-development, innovation, networking and critical process reviews," he insists. One way to save time and improve efficiency and effectiveness is through team-building and internal and external networking.

Another common problem facing managers is finding the balance between their working and private lives. It is important to commit 100 per cent to all aspects of your life. "When you are at work, be there 100 per cent," he says. "When you are with your family, be there 100 per cent; when you are focusing on your personal growth, be there 100 per cent; when you are with your friends, be there 100 per cent; and when you participate in the community, be there 100 per cent. Ideally, we should also

ensure that the different parts our lives are mutually enriching, he says. In that sense, balancing is also integrating."

Know thyself

Older managers are often confronted with mid-life transitions. If they don't understand that process and are not prepared to deal with it effectively, says Lybaert, they can find themselves inflexible, discontent, confused and making poor or irrational decisions – at which point they should seek outside help.

Another phenomenon is the 'paradox of success', says Lybaert. He explains this phenomenon through something called the four levels of learning: unconscious incompetence ("I don't know that I cannot drive a car"); conscious incompetence ("I step into a car and discover I cannot drive"); conscious competence ("I learn how to drive and become aware of this capability"); and finally, unconscious competence ("I drive without noticing my capability").

Many managers who have achieved unconscious competence can become complacent and slip back – unawares – to the first level. They no longer function well because they have not bothered with self-evaluation or refreshing their skills with 'top up' training.

"The only way to maintain quality levels is through continual feedback, evaluation and adjustment," Patrick recommends, because what contributed to your success in the past is not necessarily a good foundation for future success. "Things – even good things – do not always remain constant," he says. "Managers must be prepared for change." ■

For more on RSM Executive Education and Organisational Development:

WEB www.rsm.nl/home/lexeced



THE CHALLENGES FOR JAPAN



Across the world, business eyes are focused on Japan and how it deals with its recovery. Here, RSM's Professor Rob van Tulder and Associate Professor Taco Reus outline some of the issues they think global business students and international business managers should consider.

Text Justine Whittern

Japan's triple tragedy of earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident has gripped the global headlines for months. The ripple effects spreading out through the business, industry and the economies of Japan and further afield have sparked intellectual debate and discussion about business in a global environment.

The effects cross international borders, and the boundaries between public, private and non-profit sectors; these are some of the issues covered in RSM's MSc in Global Business and Stakeholder Management (GBSM).

"First of all, I think it's important to acknowledge that this has been a huge disaster and a very human one. We must think of the people and the human cost before we think about business," says Taco Reus, Associate Professor in RSM's Department of Business-Society Management. "But then, from an academic perspective, you very quickly start to look at it as a very multi-faceted event that has consequences for the recovery of the Japanese economy and business globally."

Rob van Tulder, Professor of International Business-Society Management, says the ripple effects we can expect to see in Japan – the world's fourth largest economy by GDP behind the European Union, the USA and China – have echoes in the past, and are also a result of the particular working culture and history of the Japanese.

innovations, particularly in sustainable energy in the short term."

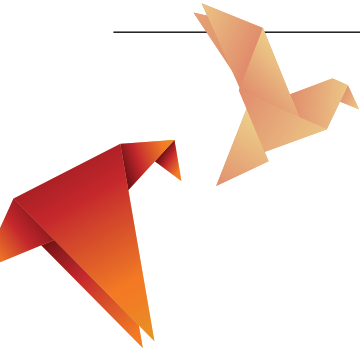
Managing uncertainty is 'business as usual' for Japan, where earthquakes are a frequent occurrence, says Van Tulder. Large Japanese companies successfully manage insecurity by creating networks of 'dual sourcing': if one supplier disappears there will be another to step into its place.

“ I predict that Japan will become an even more vibrant environment for innovations, particularly in sustainable energy.” Prof. Rob van Tulder

Reus predicts a growth in investments – and innovation – in Japan's sustainable energy industry. Prof. Van Tulder expects the same, and suggests its strongly networked society is one reason to expect success. "The country invests in the system, rather than in the gadget," he says. "I predict that Japan will become an even more vibrant environment for

A strong social dimension, with loyal trade unions, a disciplined workforce and a supportive government, means no sizeable Japanese company can be considered to operate in isolation.

Because of this, the present crisis in Japan actually provides a great opportunity – and challenge – for reconstructing the Japanese system using the *keiretsu*:



conglomerates or groups of enterprises with interlocking business relationships and shareholdings.

Prof. Van Tulder believes that much of the Japanese reconstruction will most likely be sourced from firms domestically. “The Japanese idea of community and working together in a very disciplined manner will help the recovery because that’s the only way you can survive in a country that has always experienced these kinds of natural disasters.

Reus feels that institutional theory will come into play: “Institutional theory focuses on the deeper aspects of social structure and the process by which authoritative guidelines become established,” he says. “In business, these become ‘the rules of the game’ and the accepted norms that we take for granted. But after such an environmental crisis, the whole system is up for debate. Are the old rules of ‘good’ or ‘bad’ still the right ones? This is true particularly for the nuclear industry. It will have an impact on the approach to energy efficiency and alternative energy sources.”

Japan relies heavily on nuclear power production to meet its electricity demands, but a review of the country’s renewable resources show that these could provide a big enough alternative source. However, even in the face of grave and possibly fully justified doubts, Prime Minister Naoto Kan has promised Japan will get the safest nuclear power plants in the world, capable of withstanding any future disasters.

Entrepreneurial opportunities

Both Van Tulder and Reus agree that the situation in Japan offers entrepreneurial opportunities. “The environmental jolt and

social movements fighting for changes in the rules indicate that the current status quo is up in the air,” says Reus. “Social movements often cannot achieve change without clear triggers – this series of events could be such a trigger and offers the promise of much more power to those campaigning for greener energy.”

So what do these shifts in opinion mean for business? Should they re-focus on alternative opportunities? “There are so many implications for business from the events in Japan, says Reus. “There is so much to think about, and you have to make your interpretations very carefully. In a situation like this you want to have the smartest people finding a solution, not necessarily the most powerful ones.”

Events in Japan will, no doubt, appear less frequently in global headlines in the coming months. But the ripple effects will continue to be felt. The need to understand the knock on effects reinforces the importance of being not just business managers, but truly global managers who develop international strategies to address the issues. Students seeking a career in international business and global affairs, or aiming to study GBSM should continue to watch carefully. ■

“The biggest issues in the world are discussed at the MSc in Global Business and Stakeholder Management; climate change, poverty, the financial crisis and other crises,” says Reus. This master programme from RSM is the first in the world to address one of the most critical knowledge areas for international managers in the public, private and non-profit sectors.

WEB www.rsm.nl/IGBSM



► **Rob van Tulder** is Professor of International Business-Society Management, Department of Business-Society Management.

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► **Taco Reus** is Associate Professor, Department of Business-Society Management.

WEB www.rsm.nl/treus

MICROSOFT'S MOBILITY OFFICE

There is a common expectation among forward-looking companies that through the use of information technology new ways of working can be created that will enhance workplace conditions with such an effect as to improve employee satisfaction levels, increase productivity and ultimately impact positively upon company performance.

Certainly, as far as improving the methods of working for the benefit of employees, and when seeking to recruit the best of today's bright minds, it should be borne in mind that the younger generations expect from companies environments that suit their needs.

They have no desire to spend their professional lives in a 'traditional' office environment where they will be expected to work between the hours of 9 to 5 at a desk piled high with stacks of paper. Instead, they expect collaboration tools and methods that are specifically designed to help them get the job done.

But how can organisations find the methods, tools and ways of working that are right for them? Is there a universal panacea that can be applied – a one-size-fits-all approach? Or should companies be looking within themselves for the solutions they seek?

At RSM, we have worked closely with a number of major companies to determine exactly these points. One stand out example is Microsoft Corporation.

In 2005, Bill Gates wrote a white paper "Digital Work Style: The New World Of Work". In part this served as a basis for Microsoft's exploration and subsequent development of new ways of working, about which they identified three key factors:

- That increasingly businesses function in

a knowledge based environment and that the traditional office model was not the most efficient way of organising and utilising this knowledge.

- That the Microsoft business model was changing, from traditional software sales to one that is more customer-oriented: it is about ongoing relationships with clients and working with them in teams, sometimes virtually. As such the work environment is necessarily much more collaborative and therefore needs better tools that are specifically designed to facilitate and encourage this collaboration.

- That there is fundamental truth in the philosophy that you can only create a growing company if the people employed by it are able to grow within the organisation: personal growth and personal freedom to create aspects that they think are worthwhile for themselves and for the company is important.

In the Netherlands, these three factors convinced Microsoft that it was essential to move to new offices. For them it was the start of what they described as a journey. At the outset it was clear that they would have to look to combine the virtual dimension (the role played by technology) with the physical dimension (the building itself) and the mental dimension (how people interact with new technologies, new ways of working, and a new environment).

Before the journey commenced, Microsoft approached RSM for assistance. After much discussion it was agreed that we could best assist by measuring and assessing the impact of the workplace on performance. This would be done through 'before' and 'after' measurements, ie, prior to the relocation and then again a short while after the move.

We created an online survey that would explore perceptions: individual perceptions about work dimensions and performance. In addition, we developed unique analytical



►Eric van Heck

The author of this article, Professor Eric van Heck, holds the Chair of Information Management and Markets at RSM, where he conducts research and teaches on the strategic and operational use of information technology.

WEB www.rsm.nl/evanheck



“ We spend a great part of our lives working, so it should be obvious that to get the best from us we must be happy.”

instruments that also measured working dimensions and individual performance. And we analysed the ‘before’ and ‘after’ responses to the survey.

As well as online surveys through which Microsoft employees could contribute, specific research was also conducted utilising Master’s students. For example, one explored digital working styles within the organisation. Another looked at team performance, in both physical and virtual

teams, and sought to determine if there were variances in performance between the two.

Key findings

In the first instance our research highlighted the fact that there are differing digital work styles within the corporation. In assessing these we considered the aspect of mobility. From here we were able to characterise mobility on a scale of one

(deskbound) to seven (highly mobile both internally and externally).

It became apparent that mobility was a major factor in any considerations for a new office building. Now, no one has a fixed office any more and the building has been designed to be what we call activity based. It is no longer an office in the traditional sense. Instead it is a workspace, where employees can locate themselves in different parts of the building depending on the tasks they need to perform. Increasingly, it is a meeting place where employees can interact with colleagues, partners and clients. This, our findings show, has increased even further the levels of mobility among employees.

Secondly, we looked at performance and in our analysis divided this into four dimensions: flexibility; productivity; satisfaction, and innovativeness.

A substantial increase in flexibility is shown after the move to the new tailor-made building and the adoption of new working methods. People, because they could work from home or office as they felt suited them, and in the hours of their own choosing, felt much more flexible in terms of how, where and when they could do their job.

An improvement in productivity levels was also noted by those surveyed. Satisfaction levels, which were already very high, remained so, as did the innovation dimension.

The third aspect relates to the issue of trust, and is something that prominently features in studies we have conducted with other organisations. Trust is an important element. Employees need to trust their managers, and managers need to trust their employees in terms of giving ▶

them the freedom of how, where and when they would like to work.

Managers at Microsoft had many discussions about this issue. They questioned how levels of trust could be increased. How could they give employees more freedom and yet still manage them effectively? What they came to realise was that their own perceptions had to change in terms of how to manage, and in doing so required the use of output driven methods of measuring overall employee effectiveness.

“ Microsoft came to realise that their own perceptions of management had to change.”

Also, empowerment is a crucial factor. Microsoft found that they needed to empower their people as well as give them more freedom. This, they discovered, improves employee flexibility, which in turn leads to higher productivity – but that's only if or when the element of trust is in place.

From our research Microsoft came to understand how crucial not just the design of the work environment is for company performance, but how essential it is to consider employees' perception and attitude towards working in this environment. We spend a great part of our lives working, so it should be obvious that to get the best from us we must be happy.

This is a very important message for all companies. Our research shows us that changing the workplace can lead to increased levels of productivity, flexibility, satisfaction and innovativeness. However, it has to be stressed that there is not a one-size-fits-all solution.

You cannot take Microsoft's journey and use it as a template within your own organisation. The lesson is that you have to start on your own journey, understanding the insights gained from Microsoft, and

seek to come up with a way of working that best suits your people; suits the way they would like to deal with their colleagues, their managers, and especially with your clients.

We have conducted similar research with a number of major companies, and, as corporate interest in our findings is growing, will continue to do so.

Two further dimensions have been added to our work. The first relates to sustainability and eco-efficiency. Companies are asking: can we, through new ways of working, reduce our environmental footprint? This is an area that Microsoft Corporation is currently investigating.

The second dimension relates to 'smart working' and the concept that 'smart working is smart travelling'. We are now looking at how, especially in countries like the Netherlands where traffic jams and transport overcrowding are daily occurrences, work can be redesigned in such a way that it offers more flexibility. Further, how can we utilise the existing infrastructures – the highways and rail networks, for example – in such a way that leads to higher productivity?

A lot of major questions will need to be addressed here. For example, how do we redesign work in such a way that it will improve the ecological footprint, work-life balance, customer interaction and customer service? How can we better utilise the transport infrastructures, even internet infrastructures?

If more flexibility can be created in these areas then we can finally create a situation where people can decide for themselves where to work, what to work on, which technologies and tools to use and when.

In essence, we need to question and break down many aspects of our existing preconceptions about workplaces, the work itself and how it is done. ■

This article is taken from Issue 02 of RSM Insight magazine.



I WILL CHANGE THE
CLIMATE OF BUSINESS
Gail Witeman / Professor of Sustainable
Management and Climate Change

Are you missing an INSIGHT?

"There is a common expectation among forward-looking companies that through the use of information technology new ways of working can be created that will improve employee satisfaction levels, increase productivity and ultimately impact positively upon company performance... But how can organisations find the methods, tools and ways of working that are right for them? At RSM, we have worked with a number of major companies to determine exactly these points. One stand-out example is Microsoft Corporation..."

Professor Eric van Heck from his RSM INSIGHT article 'New Ways of Working: Microsoft's Mobility Office.' Eric is RSM Chair of Information Management and Markets, a best-selling author, a consultant to international business, and a lecturer in a variety of courses for RSM Executive Education and Organisational Development.

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REAL HOPE FOR BUDDING ENTREPRENEURS

Encouraging people to start and grow their own business is an essential component of healthy economies. One organisation seeking to do just that in the Netherlands has already given many budding entrepreneurs the helping hand they need to get started. **Text** Tim Skelton

The Netherlands has a long history of innovation and an open economy that is very favourable to entrepreneurs. Yet according to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), the Total Entrepreneurial Activity (the number of entrepreneurs among the employed and job-seeking labour force) was just 5.2 per cent in 2007, below the EU average of 6.0 per cent.

While things are on the up – by 2009 the figure had risen to 7.2 per cent, above the European average – there remains a surprising lack of entrepreneurs with high-growth ambitions.

Fortunately, there are moves to improve the situation and one such initiative is the Holland Programme on Entrepreneurship (HOPE), a collaboration between Erasmus University Rotterdam, TU Delft, and Leiden University. Although these three institutions have worked together in other academic areas, there had not been a coherent approach to integrating entrepreneurship into the whole educational curriculum.

“Creating synergy between these universities, each with its own specific profile and expertise, is the ideal basis upon which to turn ideas into high-impact start-ups,” explains HOPE Director Hendrik Halbe. “Our team achieves this by bringing these institutions together. We support professors in trying to encourage more entrepreneurship in education.”

HOPE’s stated aim – ‘fostering groundbreaking entrepreneurship’ – is all about inspiring individuals to realise their entrepreneurial dreams, and attracting talent that will be a long-term asset to the business community. To achieve this, it is working on a programme that will appeal to all students.

By analysing existing educational programmes and matching these to the goals of the three partners, the idea is to promote an entrepreneurial culture, encouraging students, staff and alumni alike to think about how they can put their knowledge to good economic advantage.

Many of HOPE’s activities revolve around Get Started, a series of initiatives in which no less than 11,700 people participated in 2010.

HOPE organises a wide range of events that bring together entrepreneurs at every stage, from eager beginners to established professionals able to share their experience. These, says Halbe, “have been hugely popular and very successful.”

HOPE’s biggest achievement to date came when it hosted the Dutch event of Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) in November 2010, a worldwide initiative designed to inspire young people to

“ The Netherlands is recognised as being one of the leading countries in the world for stimulating entrepreneurship.”

But what sets HOPE apart from other schemes promoting entrepreneurship? Hendrik Halbe thinks it is its diverse origins. “The greatest benefit of our programme is that it is run jointly by three universities with very different backgrounds and focus,” he explains. “We connect technically-minded people with business-minded people: the technical guys get the business side of things, and the business people get the product.”

embrace innovation. GEW Netherlands comprised 160 individual events and attracted 17,000 participants: not just students, academics and entrepreneurs, but also business and government leaders and investors.

Preceded by a keynote speech from UK Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, the opening event, ‘Meet the Dragons’, was held at Rotterdam-The Hague Airport. Over 1,100 people watched as four young



HOPE's young entrepreneurs look to impress the 'Dragons'.

hopefuls pitched their ideas to famous tycoons (the TV 'Dragons' from the Dutch edition of Dragons' Den), in a bid to secure investments of up to a million euros.

HOPE's efforts have not gone unrecognised. "At the Global Entrepreneurship Congress in Shanghai in March, we received the 'Country of the Year Award' for entrepreneurship for organising the Dutch Global Entrepreneurship Week," Halbe says proudly. No mean achievement considering more than 100 countries participated.

The international jury rewarded HOPE for its "high quality and nationwide coverage of organised activities." Its branding was also praised. But the rewards go beyond a mere prize, says Halbe. "We are now recognised as being one of the leading countries in stimulating entrepreneurship," he says.

The international perspective continues to broaden everyone's horizons. "In March, a unique course was given by the three HOPE universities – 'Learning

from Silicon Valley' – that gave talented students the opportunity to visit and learn from this high-tech business arena. It's amazing what multidisciplinary teams of students with different backgrounds can accomplish," says Halbe.

HOPE is also beginning a 'Growth' college sequence of five interactive sessions during which the question will be posed: "What do entrepreneurs need in 2011 to grow their business?" Maintaining the forward momentum of a new business is vital, and this new programme is designed to identify growth opportunities and the hurdles that need to be overcome, with the help of prominent academics and successful entrepreneurs.

This September, HOPE will start its Entrepreneurial Talent Programme. "We see a growing number of high potential entrepreneurial students who want to start a company, but don't necessarily know yet what kind, or they want to gain more experience in doing business first," explains Halbe. "This two-year programme

gives them a unique opportunity to work at three growing companies on new business development."

Such companies do not always have the time or money to invest in bringing in entrepreneurial talent, so access to high-potential students with new ideas offers considerable benefits. "The companies receive creativity and entrepreneurship from the talent, and gain access to the expertise of three top universities," Halbe continues. "Meanwhile, the students gain invaluable experience, and through the coaching and training they receive in their specially developed programme, they also develop both personally and as entrepreneurs. It's a scenario that can only have positive economic benefits."

The formula is proving a great success, and HOPE believes it is breeding a new feeling of expectation and certainty among tomorrow's budding entrepreneurs. ■

For more information on HOPE:

WEB www.getstarted.nl

FORCES FOR CHANGE

Drug smuggling. Human trafficking. Paedophile rings. Terrorist cells. All evidence that criminal activities pay no respect to national boundaries – and why it is more essential than ever that police forces across Europe are able to collaborate effectively, irrespective of national differences. **Text** Catherine Walker

Understanding more about *how* they can do that – and indeed just how far police management and practice can be standardised across countries with very different traditions, identities and cultures – is at the core of the COMPOSITE project, which stands for Comparative Police Studies in the EU.

Funded under the security theme of the European Union's FP7 framework to the tune of €6.6m, this four-year cross-disciplinary research project represents the biggest single award of EU funding ever received within Erasmus University. RSM will be coordinating the project, which will look at large-scale change processes in police forces across Europe and involve research in ten different countries, undertaken in collaboration with 15 consortium partners.

Spearheading this complex international project is Gabriele Jacobs of RSM's Department of Organisation and Management, who also co-ordinated the successful bid on behalf of RSM and Erasmus Research Institute of Management (ERIM). An expert in cross-cultural psychology and identity, Jacobs has been fascinated by the organisational challenges of modern policing since she first began looking at police culture and practice within her native Germany about eight years ago.

"Social media, cyber crime – there are many new challenges for policing, and change is already happening in forces all over Europe," she says. "Since the

economic crisis there are serious budget constraints for all police forces, and calls for the police to become more efficient. There's a strong interest in new public management – the feeling that we need to implement within public organisations the methods used to make private organisations successful."

Police forces are also faced with the additional challenge of having to decide which of the many new technologies to adopt, as well as to respond to a growing sense of insecurity among the public, despite statistics showing that in many areas criminality is actually dropping.

The researchers within the COMPOSITE project will be analysing organisational structures, identities and cultures, and the leadership styles and processes within European police forces, examining the similarities and differences between them in order to better understand which factors may contribute to the success or failure of change programmes.

"In the first two years," says Jacobs, "we will focus on mapping the landscape of policing – understanding its strengths and weaknesses, and what the specific challenges are within each individual

“As a business school we can offer knowledge and expertise that will help the management of the police become more efficient...”

"As a business school we can offer knowledge and expertise that will help the management of the police become more efficient," argues Jacobs, "but we need to consider extremely carefully the context of policing: not only the police as a sector but also the very specific national context of policing. That was the main idea behind this project – uncovering that diversity, exploring its richness and looking more deeply at how far standardisation is feasible."

country. We will be looking at knowledge sharing, at best practice, at technology trends, to understand what's going on.

"In the final two years we will look inside the organisations themselves to try and understand just how changes are implemented. What role does leadership play? Which changes affect the organisation's identity? How is this seen by the police officers, and also by the public? What kind of police do they want?"



photo: Hans van Rhoon



photo: Hans van Rhoon



photo: Hans van Rhoon



photo: David Adams

A consortium of 15 organisations, comprising leading universities, business schools, technological research institutes and police training academies, plus the global consulting company Capgemini, is undertaking the research. Police forces in each of the ten countries are taking part – while originally just a few in each country, the number of forces is snowballing, as word spreads about the project and its likely benefits.

Active involvement by practitioners in the management process was always central to the project's design, Jacobs explains: "What's key is that it's a dialogue between practitioners and scientists, at a very high level. We have an end-user board of high-ranking police officers and a strategic advisory board with very senior officers who constantly tell us what they think is relevant. We also keep them informed about our insights and how we are moving, so there's a virtuous loop between practice and science."

Taking the project into the public arena is also important, she stresses. To complement the scientific investigations, two professional photographers are travelling across Europe to capture visually the differences between police in the countries involved. It is hoped that this material will later be used for an exhibition and book of photographs.

Jacobs is well aware from her earlier research that change processes are not without their risks: "What became very clear to us from our first study in Germany several years ago is that in many cases change is a good thing, but it can also be very dangerous. When you change an organisation like the police, you can strengthen its identity and its legitimacy, or you can weaken it.

"The strong scientific hope behind this project is that we can really improve our knowledge of organisational change while also showing the challenges and real costs of complex change processes. At the same time, we very much hope that we can actively improve the management of policing – that this theory-practitioner dialogue will really work."

More information on the COMPOSITE project, its goals, the people and partners involved, can be found at: [WEB www.rsm.nl/composite](http://www.rsm.nl/composite)

THE STRATEGY OF PHILANTHROPY

A decade ago Professor Michael Porter championed corporate philanthropy as a strategic means by which companies could improve the business environment in which they operate – and along with it their own long-term business prospects. But the Erasmus Centre for Strategic Philanthropy (ECSP) has a significantly different thrust. **Text** Catherine Walker

According to Lucas Meijs, Professor of Strategic Philanthropy at the ECSP, the focus is not about how businesses can engage in philanthropy to support their corporate strategies. “We’re focusing on how philanthropic organisations themselves can perform their philanthropy in a strategic manner – and as effectively as possible.”

“It’s about ensuring that everything done is in line with the organisation’s mission, and that all parts of the organisation – and the flow of its work – are structured in a way that allows it to tackle a problem in the best way and find the best solutions,” says Charles Erkelens, Director of the ECSP.

For that reason, Erkelens adds, core research priorities include organisational efficiency alongside governance, transparency and strategy within philanthropic organisations. “We also want to look at partnerships and grant-making – what the best ways are for foundations to give away their money to particular projects – as well as capacity building, up-scaling of successful projects and impact measurement.”

The ECSP was launched in 2009 as a joint initiative of RSM and the Erasmus School of Economics, and offers a

combination of research, education and debate about philanthropy and its impact on society. It works with a wide variety of philanthropic organisations and foundations, both grant-making foundations that administer funds to others and ‘operating foundations’ engaged in front-line social initiatives.

A central part of the ECSP’s mission is to increase knowledge and create

conference and a regular forum for organisations in the Rotterdam area.

“Within academia there’s a growing focus on the management of non-profits as well as philanthropic organisations and foundations,” says Erkelens. “Erasmus University saw the opportunity to become a front-runner in research in this area within Europe, and, in years to come, perhaps also globally.”

“A central part of the ECSP’s mission is to increase knowledge and create greater awareness of best practice.”

greater awareness of best practice within the European philanthropic sector, so that it becomes an important independent advisory body both for established organisations and for those just starting up. Equally important is to provide a platform where philanthropic organisations can come together to learn from one another and build new areas of co-operation – as has already been happening through an annual European

“It also fits with the broader corporate social responsibility of a university or school,” adds Meijs. “It provides a very clear way – alongside what we’re already doing with students – of giving something back to society. And that’s really important.”

Already the ECSP is working with national bodies such as the Johan Cruyff Foundation, Oranje Fonds, the Start Foundation and the Prins Bernhard



Cultuurfonds, along with many smaller organisations. One of the fascinations of working with this sector, says Meijs, is that it ranges from one-man bands with small numbers of volunteers to foundations dispensing millions of euros each year – yet despite the differences in scale, the problems they face are strikingly similar, especially with public sector cuts right across Europe.

“Part of the strategic challenge is to determine which kind of needs you do *not* take over from government, even though that need exists. Philanthropic organisations may decide for strategic reasons not to do something because by doing it they don’t solve the problem, they just get government – or business – off the hook.”

More effective partnerships between philanthropic organisations and business are crucial, Meijs argues – another important area of research for the ECSP.

“There are two types of partnership. One is chiefly about getting resources from a company. The second is about achieving your mission through changes in behaviour. If your goal, for example, is to do away with child labour, the most far-reaching thing you can do is to get businesses to see that it’s their responsibility to change.

“The smaller or less experienced non-profits often feel they have little voice in these partnerships, so one of the things we are researching is what it means for non-profits to engage in these kinds of partnerships. How can they get the most out of it?”

I WILL MAKE RSM A MORE
SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL

Gabi Helfert / German /
Project Manager Greening RSM

To widen the debate, the ECSP started a series of open lectures this spring, focusing on civil society and the philanthropic world. And responding to a clear need from the philanthropic organisations, it is also providing education for board members.

How will the centre ultimately gauge its success? Initially, says Erkelens, by whether they can expand the numbers of students on their programmes, extend the programmes themselves – from bachelors through to MBA and executive education – and disseminate their research by publishing in international journals. But in the next few years, their focus will be on assessing just how the management of the philanthropic organisations has changed on the issues the ECSP is prioritising for research.

“We’ll consider ourselves successful if we have really been able to make a difference to the strategy and performance of organisations within the sector,” says Meijs. “Of course, in 10 or 15 years, we expect our graduates to be running those organisations. But maybe it’s still just a little too early for that!” ■

Erasmus Centre for Strategic Philanthropy
WEB www.ecsp.nl

WHEN ONLY THE BEST IS GOOD ENOUGH

Yogen Singh, a partner at global professional services firm PwC, believes that his firm is the best in the world at what it does. To maintain that position it must recruit only the best candidates. And RSM, he says, is exactly the place to find them. **Text** Joe Figueiredo

Given the problems the economy has faced over the last years, you would imagine there would be an abundance of talent just waiting to be recruited in the Netherlands, says Yogen Singh, a partner with PwC, the global professional services firm, and head of strategy practice and recruitment at its Financial Services business unit in the Netherlands. “Not so,” he says. “Especially when you are looking to hire staff with at least 3-4 years experience. After all, smart people are always in demand, during both good times and bad.”

However, recruits with prior practical experience, while attractive, are not the end-all for PwC. There are enormous benefits to recruiting raw and pliant talent, which can be subsequently groomed and moulded to your own company requirements, he notes. Which is why PwC is looking to business schools, like RSM, for its new recruits.

A fitting arrangement

“RSM is the best business school in the Netherlands, and we are only looking for the best,” says Singh. What makes RSM attractive is that students enrolling in a number of its programmes are well screened: they need to have recognised academic credentials and pass the standard GMAT assessment test. He can also be sure that graduates have been instilled with the qualities they need in their recruits. “We have five requirements,” he says. “In addition to having a sound academic foundation, recruits

should be highly motivated and hard working; they should have team spirit and add to the diversity of our practice and firm.”

RSM offers an excellent fit between demand and supply. Recruitment is growing rapidly alongside PwC’s client base and client demands, Singh explains. “Financial Services alone is looking to grow significantly in the coming years, compared with other consulting firms in the Netherlands.” On the supply side, RSM annually graduates around 1,200 students, providing a perfect selection pool in terms of choice and scale from which PwC can select the recruits it needs every year, he says. “That’s why we are partnering with RSM to encourage and stimulate the type of graduates they are cultivating.”

Global approach

It is equally important, he says, for new and potential recruits to understand where PwC is coming from and how it conducts its business. “PwC’s aggressive recruitment reflects its ever-growing client base,” says Singh. “We have a close relationship with our clients, whom we consider and treat as business partners. There is not only mutual respect, but also mutual understanding of each other’s problems, and, more importantly, a willingness to help each other through difficult times.”

There are several key reasons why potential recruits choose to work for PwC. “We consider ourselves the best, and I’m proud to say that,” explains Singh. “We offer our clients a wide range of services and solutions. We serve the majority of the Fortune-500 companies, in one way or another.”

He goes on to explain that global clients require global solutions, which means PwC has to be global as well. “Operating locally in 151 countries and employing 163,000 people, our company has a depth and breadth of knowledge



► **Yogen Singh**

A partner with PwC, Yogen is head of strategy practice and recruitment at its Financial Services business unit in the Netherlands.



“ RSM is the best business school in the Netherlands, and we are only looking for the best...”

and expertise no other consultancy can match. I can imagine young graduates find it most exciting to be offered a wide range of disciplines, geographies and cultures to work in.”

Special event

PwC is in the midst of organising a business course that offers RSM students the chance to secure a coveted traineeship contract with the firm. While open to all RSM students, a rigorous selection procedure will ensure only the best qualify. “Students will have to meet a set of criteria to apply,” says Singh, “They will then undergo further screening before the final 15 are picked to participate in a three-day business workshop to be held this July at a surprise location.”

The highlight of the event is a real-life client case (with the client in attendance) that participants will be required to resolve. Participants will be divided into teams and the winning team will be awarded a traineeship contract. In addition, participants will receive training in such areas as consulting skills, PwC’s methodology, and how they approach client problems. “Of course, there will also be entertainment and fun activities,” he adds. “We are making a fair investment to ensure success.”

PwC also runs an internship programme for CEMS students. “Our reason for selecting these students is that they are not time-constrained,” explains Singh. “We currently have four CEMS interns working on a special project for

clients.” Depending on their project results, students can expect to receive a job offer with PwC.

Ties that bind

Singh reflects on the changing relationship between PwC and MBA Career Development and CEMS Career Services, and with Joep Elemans and Frieda Franke, their respective heads. “Our relationship has risen to a totally new level for two reasons,” he explains. “Firstly, recruitment had fallen in the preceding two years because, like any other firm, we had problems recruiting. Secondly, PwC needed to be very aggressive in the market and one of the best ways to send a message is by working with students. After all, students eventually graduate and if we make the right impression they will remember us as professionals. That is why we have worked hard to strengthen our relationship with RSM.”

A good relationship is of mutual benefit, he emphasises. PwC offers RSM access to its clients and live cases, but also the opportunity to come and talk to people with practical experience in the real world.

As for the future, PwC is seeking even more from this lucrative relationship. “I really do not need to go to a Harvard or INSEAD to fulfil my recruitment needs,” says Singh. “I have RSM with all its potential – locally. And I am ready to recruit, big time. I would like to see RSM further using its resources to develop an environment in which we can collaborate in breeding the type of students PwC can subsequently recruit and deploy.” ■

RSM Career Services:

EMAIL careerservices@rsm.nl

TEL +31 10 408 2010

WEB www.rsm.nl/home/students/Career_Services

MBA Career Development Centre:

EMAIL jelemans@rsm.nl

TEL +31 10 408 2611



GIANT STEPS LEAVE SMALLER FOOTPRINTS

Improving the environmental footprint of the school and inspiring students to conduct business in a sustainable way as they develop their careers is the mission of Greening RSM. Recently, the project has made advances beyond the campus – an added bonus to its more immediate goals. **Text** Deborah Valentine



► **Gabi Helfert**, Project Manager for Greening RSM. Find out more about Greening RSM's plans for the future:

WEB www.rsm.nl/greening

NEWSLETTER email to greeningsm@rsm.nl

TWITTER twitter.com/greeningsm

FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/greeningsm

Greening RSM had its operational start in 2010, having grown from a pilot project in 2006 into an important philosophy for the school. Today it is staffed by the equivalent of one full-time employee, three officers and one student assistant – and together they co-ordinate the activities and enthusiasm of more than 60 volunteers from the student body, faculty and administrative staff.

The efforts and activities undertaken are not done in isolation, but as part of a constructive and co-operative strategic effort to involve many areas of the school's life and community.

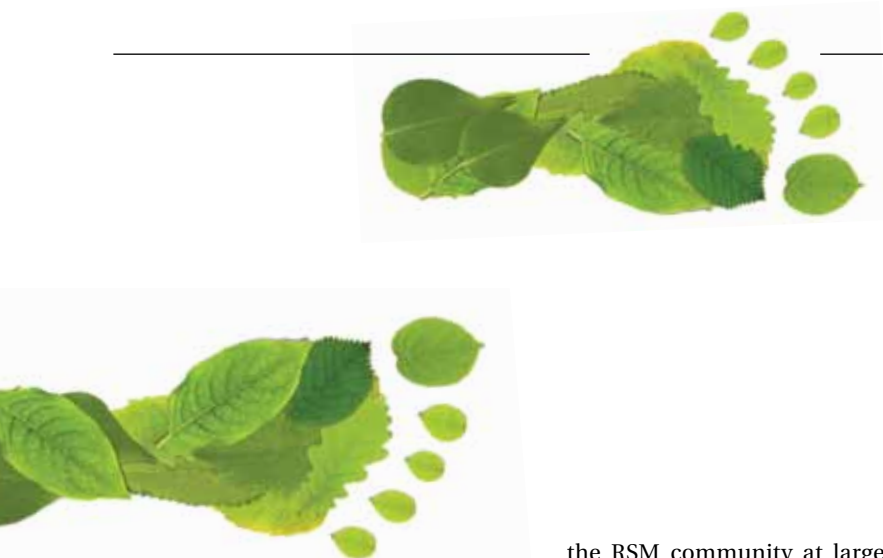
For project manager Gabi Helfert, the key to this success – and the rate at which the initiative is progressing – is due largely to the manner in which it is structured.

In line with the school's motivation to develop a deep appreciation of social and environmental stewardship amongst its students, this structure has been designed to advance specific objectives relating to eco-sustainability issues.

Four Working Groups (WG) have been established, each of which contributes towards the bigger picture by focusing on specific activities and goals – in teaching, research, in the operations of the school's buildings and facilities, and in communications – by providing platforms for sharing information with an audience inside and outside the school.

Naturally, there is overlap in the activities of each WG, and it is a tribute to Greening RSM's project management team that the groups have been able to work together productively and effectively. Introducing sustainability into a curriculum, for instance, involves not only teaching new subjects in the programmes.

It involves discontinuing the use of plastic covers for student projects, discouraging unnecessary printing, and introducing 100 per cent recycled office paper as standard from May 2011 onwards, which in turn involves the participation and involvement of the school's facilities department. In 2010, consumption of A4 paper at RSM amounted to 3.65 million sheets,



or more than 300 twenty-year old trees.

Teaching, research and facilities also share a role in influencing the amount of carbon emissions resulting from faculty and student travel. According to a study undertaken by Greening RSM, travel accounts for 70 per cent of Erasmus University's (EUR's) eco-footprint.

Three recommendations intended to address this issue were thus made to the RSM Management Team. One has since been adopted as a one-year pilot project: the compensation of all greenhouse gas

the RSM community at large, such as reducing margins and line spacing when printing, and encouraging the student study association to suggest alternative sponsorship options for refreshments at events so that plastic bottles and cups can be avoided if water or soft drink dispensers are provided.

Making improvements

Two years ago, RSM installed Nespresso coffee machines in its kitchens. These machines brew espresso from aluminium capsules containing ground coffee. At the time the choice was made, environmental

Greening RSM's pressure on Nespresso to set up a national scheme is in no small measure responsible for this. To be a part of something in your own small world that has had an impact far beyond your borders is "amazing", says Gabi, "and keeps us motivated to go for more gains, more impact."

Another recent result of Greening RSM's work shows how the project is positively influencing academic operations at the school. Academic theses, published in book form, must be reproduced not only in a presentable manner, but also in a format suitable for archiving. The Erasmus Institute for Research in Management (ERIM), the joint research institute of RSM and the Erasmus School of Economics, publishes around 40 such books annually. From this year onwards these publications will be 'greener' thanks to the efforts of ERIM's Executive Director, Wilfred Mijnhart.

Choosing to use electronic publishing options in addition to printing reduces the print run by 25 per cent. Furthermore, in future these publications will be printed on paper containing 50 per cent recycled fibre, a move that ensures they still comply with the required longevity standards.

Even more exciting is the fact that the printing company, which is also responsible for producing around 80 per cent of all PhD theses in the Netherlands, has opted to use this paper for its other clients, an indicator of the long-term environmental stewardship in the wider community created by Greening RSM. ■

“ In 2010, RSM used 3.65 million sheets of A4 paper. That's 300 trees.”

emissions from business flights. The study shows that this alone will lead to an almost 40 per cent reduction in RSM's environmental footprint, and make a significant contribution towards EUR's commitment towards achieving 75 per cent sustainable procurement by 2013.

As well as these large schemes, Greening RSM continuously scrutinises the school for opportunities to improve its environmental footprint. Quick wins already implemented include: installing auto power-offs for computers after office hours; replacing chemical cleaning agents with biodegradable ones; circulating simple tips and tricks within

concerns were offset by assurances from the supplier that the capsules were recyclable. The fine print, however, did not make it clear that recycling was not yet performed in the Netherlands and the capsules were therefore processed alongside other waste.

Greening RSM continued its negotiations with the company and made its wishes clear: the capsules should be recycled, particularly as RSM consumes 120,000 capsules per year. At the achievable recovery rate of 55 per cent, this is the equivalent of 70kg of aluminium or 10 new bicycle frames each year. Today, a Dutch facility recycles the capsules, and

MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

Created in 2008, the Corporate and Alumni Relations department (CAR) of RSM has been central – but often less than fully visible – in launching a range of new events and initiatives that are keeping the school’s alumni and corporate community more actively engaged than ever.

Text Lesa Sawahata

But CAR is charged with more than giving RSM alumni – a diverse group encompassing graduates of both Dutch and English language programmes, from the original VIB alumni of 1972 to the MBA/EMBA graduates of 2011 – a sense of connection with ongoing developments at the school.

The CAR team is also the ‘mastermind’ in creating approaches, strategies and events that build valuable connections between key internal and external RSM stakeholders. Strengthening these connections – mutually beneficial relationships between RSM, its alumni, its faculty, and business partners – was one of the primary objectives behind the formation of the department under the Directorship of Connie Tai, in September 2008.

“ One of the jobs CAR does is to unite all of our external relations, but there are still challenges.”

Taking alumni seriously

The creation of CAR is a reflection of the need for ever-greater professionalism in the way that RSM shepherds its relationships with alumni and its corporate connections, and showcases its strengths: business-relevant research carried out by respected faculty, and a concomitant



supremacy in European management education. And it is indicative of the awareness that, after 40 years, the RSM alumni network has matured, and today includes many respected names in international business.

The cliché for any business school is that “our alumni are our greatest asset” – and it’s true. Alumni can be a rich source of advice, recruitment, talent, fundraising, and an ongoing connection to business and policy-making. But by 2008, it was clear that this great asset was still largely untapped by RSM in any formal and cohesive way. The issue was the very diversity of the RSM alumni population. While the school is proud of its internationalism, diversity can also work against alumni engagement.



Dutch, but it doesn't make sense to send a Dutch newsletter to our MBA alumni. So one of the big issues will always be: how do we communicate in a way that makes all of our alumni feel valued? is quick to add that forming the CAR office was not just a means to unify the school's alumni population on an administrative level. While the challenges of language remain, RSM alumni have gotten something much more important. "As Director of CAR, I am part of the management

The Corporate and Alumni Relations team. From left to right:

Nicole Eshuis, Student Assistant Bastiaan Scheutjens, Larissa Wiltenburg, Marijke de Kovel, Student Assistant Marijn de Ruiter, Connie Tai, Eva Rood, Irene Broekmans-Versluijs. To contact the CAR Team

EMAIL alumni@rsm.nl

Events that build bridges

One of the clear strengths of RSM derives from the Erasmus Research Institute of Management (ERIM), the top-ranked European management institute to which the school is allied, and from which its faculty is derived. Stringent requirements for generating knowledge and publishing in peer-review journals mean the international standing of RSM professors and their work is extremely high.

The question raised by Dean George Yip in 2008 was how to highlight the relevance of this RSM research to business – and impress RSM's alumni and business leaders at large, with the significance of the management knowledge being produced by the school.

The answer? Journeys With Erasmus (JWE), a conference and debate series that launched in November 2008, soon after the formation of CAR. "We came up with JWE quickly," says RSM Executive in Residence Theo Backx (see *RSM Outlook Winter 2008 for more on Theo Backx*), who functions as the 'recruiter' of heavyweight business leaders for the RSM Advisory Board and its activities, as well as such events as JWE.

The idea behind JWE, which takes place three to four times each year, is that a small panel of expert business practitioners meet with leading RSM faculty members to discuss a topical issue. The audience, comprised of alumni, is then invited to question, comment, and debate with these leaders, who have included such academics as Prof. Noreena Hertz; political leaders such as Ivo H. Daalder (the Dutch- ▶

Prior to the formation of the CAR office there were two virtually independent Alumni Offices, one for the 15,000-plus graduates of primarily pre-experience, government-funded Dutch-language programmes, and the other for the 5,000-plus graduates of the post-experience, mostly English-language MBA, MFM or Executive programmes of the RSM BV.

"One of the jobs that CAR does is to unite all of our external relations, but there are challenges," says Eva Rood, Manager Alumni & Corporate Relations MSc, BSc, PhD. "For example, which language do we use for a newsletter that goes to all alumni? Alumni of our Dutch programmes expect to be addressed in

team, and report directly to the dean," she says. "Forming the CAR office was a clear signal, internally and externally, of the importance of RSM alumni to the organisation."

A further step towards the unification and empowerment of RSM alumni has been the formation of an Alumni Advisory Board, which comprises representatives of all RSM programmes. "Putting decisions in the hands of a centralised board means that the overall concerns of alumni can be taken to the management team," says Connie. "Finally our alumni feel they have 'a place at the table' and that their opinions and needs are expressed to RSM management."

American US Ambassador to NATO) and Peter Paul de Vries, and business leaders that include Hendrik Muilerman, CEO of BP Netherlands and Arend Kapteyn, Managing Director and Chief Economist EMEA Deutsche Bank AG.

“The advantage of this is the content – it isn’t just a nice networking event,” says Backx. “The alumni can see how our faculty and research have a real impact on business. This dialogue is not just symbolic – JWE makes it concrete,” he says. Further, “you see that RSM is investing in external relations, in creating a relationship with important figures in international business.”

Working along with the dean, the CAR team and Theo Backx have been instrumental not just in creating corporate partnerships, but in acting as a steward for these crucial relationships. The result of this careful tending has been an increase in funds for research – for example the endowment of the Ecorys NEI Chair in Sustainability and Climate Change, held by Prof. Gail Whiteman, and that of the Duff & Phelps Chair in Business Analysis and Evaluation, held by Prof. Erik Peek – and vital support for other areas of the school.

“Our corporate partnerships with Eastman, ING and Ahold have enriched RSM not just with goodwill, but with MSc and MBA scholarships, ongoing recruitment of graduates of all our programmes, and honours courses for high-potential students,” says Connie Tai. “The team was also instrumental in connecting MBA candidates to the GE Live Series, an interactive discussion with GE CEO Jeff Immelt via live satellite feed. Five global business schools participated, making it a great way for our students to network and to learn more about GE.”

The pride of Rotterdam

The success of Journeys With Erasmus led to another type of event in October 2009: the first iteration of the RSM Leadership Summit. The Leadership Summit provides a platform for top executives of such companies as Bain & Company, GE, Heineken and Philips to share their wisdom with an international contingent of alumni and senior managers each year.

Further, it links RSM firmly to the City of Rotterdam. This is an important relationship for both parties. The supremacy of RSM and Erasmus University in research and education is good for the city, and so are RSM’s alumni – they act as ambassadors for Rotterdam, and are a rich vein of talent for the local business community. With this in mind, the City of Rotterdam began its sponsorship of the RSM Distinguished Alumni Awards (DAA) at the RSM Leadership Summit.



Awards at the 2010 Leadership Summit. “RSM is a strong brand name with an excellent reputation; the marketing and branding of the city depends upon enthusiastic partners like RSM. The cooperation between RSM, the business community, and the City of Rotterdam is something we will cherish for many years to come,” he said.

“How do we communicate in a way that makes all of our alumni feel valued?”

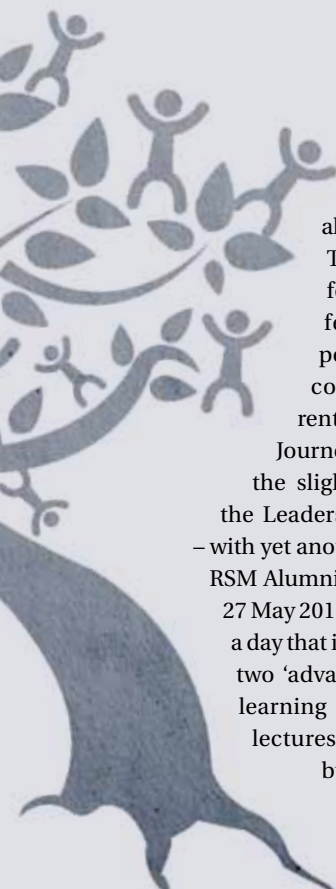
The Distinguished Alumni Awards build pride not just within the RSM alumni population – with such stellar DAA recipients as Alexander Ribbink, former COO of TomTom, and Bart Becht, former CEO Reckitt Benckiser – but also flag the importance of the school in the global business environment.

“The City of Rotterdam is very proud of such an internationally-renowned school,” said Robbert Nesselaaar, Creative Director of the Chief Marketing Office Rotterdam in introducing the Distinguished Alumni

An intrapreneurial approach

With a small team, short deadlines, and big expectations, Connie Tai says that an intrapreneurial approach is essential for the CAR team. “We’re constantly working on innovative ways to interest alumni in RSM; then we have to find ways to support, improve, and broaden these initiatives,” she says.

Delivering activities that provide value far beyond networking is a new approach to alumni engagement for RSM. And it means a new model: it means asking



alumni to give.

This may take the form of the small fee (covering a portion of catering costs and room rental) for events like Journeys With Erasmus, the slightly larger fee for the Leadership Summit, and – with yet another new initiative, RSM Alumni Day, launched on 27 May 2011 – around €100 for a day that includes a choice of two ‘advanced practitioner’ learning sessions of three lectures, each presented by leading RSM professors.

“The challenge is how to fill a room if an alumni event isn’t free,” says Irene Broekmans-Versluijs, Manager MBA Alumni Relations. “RSM Alumni Day actually provides three lectures with three great faculty members plus two meals and refreshments, so alumni also get a great opportunity to network. It would cost much more if it were billed as an executive education event – but with every ‘first time’ event we need to demonstrate value.”

With these rapidly proliferating events, it also means that CAR has to demonstrate flexibility – a willingness to listen keenly to alumni opinion, and quickly adjust the content or format or price – to keep their audience interested and satisfied.

“Right now the CAR team is in a constant process of trial and experimentation. It is a process that

helps deepen knowledge about our primary stakeholders: our alumni,” says Connie Tai.

One of the lessons learnt? The Netherlands in general has “no real culture of alumni giving as yet,” says Connie Tai. “In the USA or the UK, alumni expect to be contacted for fundraising purposes. In the Netherlands, there is often the feeling that charity is a more personal affair, and that it’s not necessary to donate to one’s school.”

Thus why the launch of the RSM Annual Fund, in early 2010, has taken some agile thinking, a good deal of persuasiveness, and the focusing of fundraising upon tangible goals chosen by alumni themselves.

RSM fundraising: gaining speed

The process of getting to know the alumni has revealed that they need to know precisely what they are supporting. So the RSM Annual Fund enables donors to choose how their gift will be allocated: to research, international exchange or MBA scholarships, sustainability or women’s initiatives.

Still, the first months of the RSM Annual Fund were lacklustre in terms

of alumni engagement. The majority of alumni of the government-funded programmes felt no great impetus to give; meanwhile the MBA programmes’ ‘culture of giving’ was focused upon the RSM International Charity Foundation, which is supported by graduating MBA and EMBA classes.

CAR’s subsequent fundraising brainstorm of 2010 was I WILL KEEP RSM RUNNING STRONG: an initiative that allows alumni to support an RSM team of runners in the annual Rotterdam Marathon, which occurs each April.

Made up of students, the 2010 I WILL KEEP RSM RUNNING STRONG team consisted of just ten members; the initiative was launched barely four weeks in advance of the Rotterdam Marathon. The donations were modest. But the format spoke to RSM alumni. Perhaps it was simply the sheer physical commitment of ‘taking fundraising to the streets of Rotterdam’ that created a ‘click’ for many alumni.

In any case, the 2011 fundraising event produced a 60-member RSM Marathon Team, who raised around €1,200 in support of the RSM Annual Fund (the total goal for the RSM Annual Fund for 2011 is €13,500).

Even Connie Tai, a novice runner (and an alumna of the RSM MBA) took to the streets and ‘ran her talk’ in the 5K loop of the Marathon. “I couldn’t ask for money for the Annual Fund without being engaged myself,” she says. “I’m proud of RSM, and of our alumni, and of the RSM Marathon Team. Next year, we think we could actually have a 100-member Marathon Team,” she says. “This is the sort of engagement that every school wants.” ■

Taking Fundraising Out of the Box

The RSM Annual Fund enables RSM alumni to support the school in the way they choose. Donations may be allocated to the initiative that is most significant to the giver. Your tax-deductible support benefits scholarships, research, facilities, sustainability, or women at RSM.

WEB www.rsm.nl/annualfund

AN EYE ON THE FUTURE

Vincent Everts doesn't tick all the usual boxes of a business school alumnus. For one thing, he never found time to finish his studies. But that hasn't held him back – and if anything could be testimony to just how good his education was. **Text** Tim Skelton

Describing himself as an entrepreneur and trend-watcher (“I specialise in technology trends, looking at how these change the way we work and live.”), he studied physics, economics and political science before applying to study business at RSM. “Business school was the most fantastic thing,” he says, “because it brought me in contact with people with different backgrounds. I’ve always had a broad range of interests and diversity appeals to me.”

Instead of graduating he became, in his words, a “college dropout”. It was entrepreneurship that led him astray. “While at RSM I was inspired to start my first company [Cyclo] with some friends, installing networks and CAD at a time when computers were just

America to pursue another start-up opportunity and stayed for five years. “I started a software company involved in document management. In the end we had 100 people working there,” he says proudly.

On returning from the United States he was tempted into trying education a third time, convinced he needed to finish his studies. He spent a year at university writing a thesis on an estimation model for SAP implementation. It was a model so effective that it is still used by companies today.

“It was great going back,” he explains. “I was 35, much older than the other students.” Before graduating however, he was lured away yet again, this time by the opportunity to preside over the set up of Media Plaza. “It was the early days of the internet,” says Everts. “I was asked to set up a demonstration centre, where people could be educated about what it meant for business. I don’t regret leaving, but it means I could be the longest dropout ever!”

More projects followed. After Media Plaza, Everts worked with venture capitalist Roel Pieper, before the government sought his expertise on its *kilometerheffing* scheme. Then came the internet

““ My kids are the most amazing, time-intensive gadgets I’ve ever had – and the most complex.”

coming out,” he explains. He had just weeks of studies left, but the lure of success prompted him to concentrate on running the business instead.

Five years later he was back at school – but for only two weeks. This time he left for

start-ups, including innovation consultancy www.interimic.com, video management company www.yubby.com, www.innovader.nl and www.corporateporting.com.

“Nowadays you can have companies with people working anywhere in the world; it costs



one-tenth to start up than it once did, and you can still accomplish things faster,” he says.

Vincent is a public speaker and keen video blogger. “I’ve interviewed everyone from technology gurus to politicians. I live my life online, via my websites, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter – I’m pretty much an open book,” he confesses.

He also has a passion for new technology and is known as ‘Mr Gadget’. “I don’t like 99 per cent of gadgets because they don’t work properly,” he says. But he enthuses about others. “I like to try new things. If the experience is positive, I talk about it. I do about 250 video blog reviews a year (www.baldopinions.com). My review of the latest iPad is always more watched than, say, me interviewing Gerard Kleisterlee on the influence of social media to Philips. But for me it’s more about the way gadgets affect our lives. PCs changed the way we work, and now mobiles make everything much more flexible.”

How does he find time for all this? “Actually I don’t work much at all any more,” he admits. “I have two young children [aged five and two and a half], and my wife is very busy lecturing on parenting at Hogeschool Leiden.

“My kids are the most amazing, time-intensive gadgets I’ve ever had – and the most complex. But I’ve organised my life so I can spend time with them. Using my BlackBerry, and with all my services in the ‘cloud’, I can do anything from anywhere and still be involved.”

As such, he says, he has never been happier. “I have more free time and make more money than ever. I never have an appointment before 10 in the morning, and I’m never in a traffic jam.”

But happiness doesn’t mean resting on one’s laurels. Vincent’s latest project is <http://leafplan.nl>. “I’m trying to reduce my carbon footprint by 80 per cent,” he explains. “I’m switching from an ugly diesel to a Nissan Leaf electric car.”

Via the website, people will be able to see

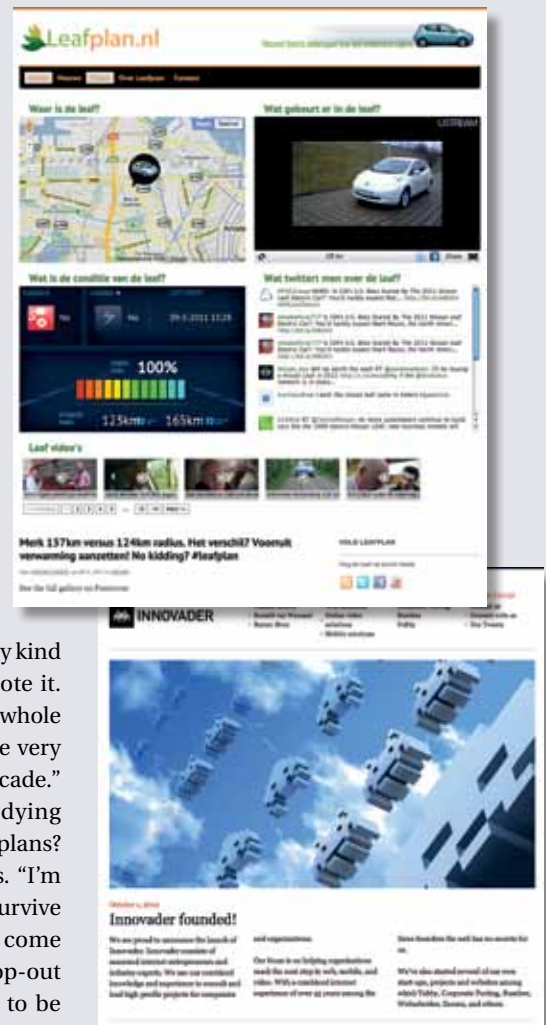
where Vincent’s Nissan Leaf goes and who is inside – it will have cameras and act as a mobile studio. “I’m going to have people driving it to see how it feels while I interview them about whatever they’re doing and about sustainability. It drives amazingly – I’m going to be an ambassador and use every kind of social media to promote it. Why? Because I think the whole sustainable sector will be very exciting in the coming decade.”

Does finishing studying feature at all in Vincent’s plans? “Not any more,” he says. “I’m 51 now, so I think I can survive without a diploma! I’ve come to terms with being a drop-out and see it as something to be proud of.”

That doesn’t mean RSM hasn’t played a key role. “Business school was really important,” he acknowledges. “The greatest thing was meeting people from so many different backgrounds – economics, politics, languages – and the experiences we shared. It was a fantastic period.”

For the time being Vincent is busy being a father. “I’m trying to work the least possible hours and have the best possible experience,” he says.

“I have no ambition at all to build a big company – the more people you work with the more of a pain in the neck it becomes. Instead, my goal is to influence the way people make their lives better, and help them achieve things with the least possible organisational baggage.” ■



EVENTS IN REVIEW



THANK YOU RSM ALUMNI DAY

The Corporate and Alumni Relations team wishes to thank everyone who made the first RSM ALUMNI DAY: THE NEXT FRONTIERS OF MANAGEMENT, held on 27th May 2011, a resounding success.

In addition to our valued alumni, we would like to thank keynote speaker and Distinguished RSM Alumnus Bart Becht; and Prof. Harry Barkema, Prof. Will Felps, Prof. Wolfgang Ketter, Dr. Vincent Kouwenhoven, Prof. Patrick Reinmoeller, Prof. Steef van de Velde and Dean George Yip.

Save the Date! Next year's RSMALUMNI DAY will be held on **Friday 25 May 2012**. Don't miss this opportunity for a day of knowledge and networking on the forward edge of management.

For more information see www.rsm.nl/alumni/day or contact alumni@rsm.nl.



RSM ENGAGED BUSINESS LEADERS FORUM

Prior to her April 1st Inaugural Speech (see NEWS), Professor Gail Whiteman

hosted a private pre-Inaugural event: The RSM Engaged Business Leaders Forum. Held in the Tea House of the Trompenburg Arboretum, this intimate event brought together 25 business and policy-making leaders – including Dutch royalty - to brainstorm about how to embed sustainability and its related concerns into management education.

The forum was opened by Dean George Yip, who extended a special welcome to Her Royal Highness Princess Irene van Lippe-Biesterfeld and to His Royal Highness Prince Carlos de Bourbon de Parme. Co-host Marten van Bossche, CEO and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Ecorys, which sponsors Professor Whiteman's Chair in Sustainability and Climate Change at RSM, said a few words of welcome.

Prof Whiteman charged the assembled experts with their task: each of four breakout groups had to come up with two great ideas for embedding sustainability in management education within 30 minutes, then make a brief presentation about them. "In just 30 minutes we have many provocative ideas," she said, "from very experienced people. Thank you. I'd like to use the momentum provided by my Ecorys Chair to do something with these ideas, so that in a year they will be part of RSM management education in some significant way."

EMBA SOUTH AFRICAN STUDY TOUR

The most recent study tour for the EMBA 2012 class, which ran February 28th to March 4th 2011, took them to the complex social and economic landscape of South Africa. The week included visits to local businesses, ranging from supermarket leader Pick n Pay to local NGOs and financial institutions including Nedbank.

The central activity of the EMBA study tour, however, is the Team Assignment



– in this case 'Growth Strategies for Small Business in Emerging Markets.'

"This was a mini consulting assignment involving real South African businesses, most of them small entrepreneurial ventures," says Ella Boniuk, Director Executive MBA Programme. "The Team Project is a way to test all they've learned so far – in this case it was a chance to grow and improve a business, in a time-pressured environment."

Two EMBA teams were assigned to each organisation. Each team was charged with outlining a business plan, and given a small amount of funds so that 'their' organisation – this year's included an orphanage, a dance school, and a street patrol, all in the economically-challenged Alexandra Township of Johannesburg – would have seed money to begin the deployment of these business plans.

The EMBA 2012 class went far beyond the call of duty, arranging loans and even computers for their 'clients'. "What I found remarkable was the level of engagement and sense of ownership shown by every single EMBA on this study tour," says Ella.

EMBA's Sophie van Dam (Dutch) and Jeroen Dudley-Owen (South African) discovered new things about themselves, South Africa, and corporate social responsibility under challenging circumstances during their Study Tour. Read more at www.rsm.nl/home/mba

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

HR NETWORKING EVENT

For HR departments, there are always pressures on costs and headcount, and difficult decisions about what to outsource.

RSM's Executive Education and Organisational Development department (EOD) is hosting a networking event for HR executives on **Wednesday, 8 June** which should throw some light on the subject. The event, to be held on the Woudestein Campus in Rotterdam from 15.00 - 17.30, is entitled *HR Transformation - Exploring ways to better organize ourselves*, and features two speakers.

Fugro is a company collecting and interpreting data relating to the earth's surface for governments and the oil and gas, construction and mining industries, and was winner of the Erasmus Innovation Award earlier this year. Its Senior HR Manager Huib Visser will give his insights into how a decentralised global organisation functions.

Patrick Wright is Professor of Strategic Human Resources at Cornell University. He will present the latest findings from studies into the role of chief human resource officers in global companies. RSM has participated in the study, and the results should be a useful benchmark for European companies.

For more information email Monique Collignon mcollignon@rsm.nl.



CLIMBING BEYOND THE METAPHOR

For decades women have faced barriers in reaching the summits of management success. This challenge has been likened to 'climbing a mountain' – and in high heels.

Women in the RSM MBA Kilimanjaro Project: Women Empowering Women have the opportunity to move beyond the metaphor. This new, experiential elective course transforms the difficulties of scaling the highest mountain in Africa into deep confidence, strong leadership and the committed support of team members.

"Using Kilimanjaro as an MBA classroom aims to give our women participants a 'Wow – I can do anything' experience," says Dianne Bevelander, Associate Dean MBA Programmes. "They will be able to experience and discuss the tangible drivers of leadership while they take calculated risks, climbing in an ever-changing environment – a metaphor for the world of business." Building a winning team that will reach the top, despite unforeseeable challenges, is an essential take-away lesson for participants.

The idea for the RSM MBA Kilimanjaro Project arose from a meeting between Dianne and Rebecca Stephens, the first British woman to have climbed Everest. Stephens – a respected motivational speaker and coach – has leveraged her experiences as a climber into the book *Seven Summits of Success*, in which she likens ascending ever-higher summits into the stages of managerial success.

On September 20th-29th 2011, 15 participants of the RSM MBA Programmes will make their 5,895 metre (19,341 ft) ascent of Kilimanjaro under Rebecca Stephens' expert leadership. "These women will be equipped to revolutionise the face of business in the future, bringing their own special brand of leadership into international boardrooms and making gender diversity – and its benefits to business – a reality," says Bevelander.

Further support is still being sought, so please contact Hetty Brand-Boswijk at hboswijk@rsm.nl if you would like to give our MBA women further sponsorship on their way to the top.

More information on Rebecca Stephens can be found at www.rebeccastephens.com

FIND OUT
MORE ABOUT
RSM'S EVENTS
AT **WWW.RSM.
NL/EVENTS**

FAREWELL SYMPOSIUM FOR PROFESSOR BERT BALK



The retirement of Professor of Economic Measurement and Economic-Statistical

Research Bert M. Balk this summer will be marked by a symposium on productivity on **Friday, 10 June**, jointly organised by ERIM and RSM. His colleagues will discuss aspects of productivity measurement and research, and provide an assessment of the state of the art in this field. The afternoon symposium in J-building on the Woudestein campus from 13.00 to 17.00 follows a buffet lunch.

Prof. Balk has held a chair in Business Administration, supported by the Journal of the Netherlands Society for Statistics and Operations Research, Statistics Netherlands, since 2001. Speakers on June 10 include RSM's Steef van de Velde, Erik Veldhuizen from the Dutch Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, Mark Vancauteren from the University of Hasselt, Eric Bartelsman from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Koen Dittich from RSM. Jos Blank from Delft University of Technology and Jan Dul from RSM.

For more information, or to reserve a place, email Tony Hak thak@rsm.nl.



CROSSING MEDIA TO BUILD BRANDS

Harry Dekker, Media Director for Unilever Benelux and Director of Strategy, Sanoma Media Kuldip Singh will be sharing their marketing successes, challenges and dilemmas in the next 'Journeys with Erasmus' evening seminar at RSM on **Tuesday, 28 June**. The guest speakers will talk on the enormous variety of media channels and how they can be leveraged for brand building.

Unilever is one of the biggest advertisers in the Benelux countries in terms of spending. Harry Dekker will describe Unilever's change management processes and its experiments in online activities, how the organisation balances its media mix, and uses cross-channel methods to communicate consistently to customers about their brands. "Digital media is at the top of our agenda," he says.

Sanoma Media is the Netherlands' largest print and online publisher. Director of Strategy Kuldip Singh will describe the latest trends in cross-media developments, and present case studies that illustrate effective ways to reach consumers. He will report on the latest developments and thinking on the subject of cross-media mixes.

The event will be introduced and chaired by RSM assistant professor Stefano Puntoni and co-presented by Philip Sijthoff, Media Manager at Unilever Benelux. Speakers will take questions from the audience after the presentations.

The small registration fee includes a light dinner and drinks; alumni €20, corporate guests €25, full-time students €7.50.

For more information and registration, see the 'events' section of www.RSM.nl/journeys



ALUMNI SUMMER BARBECUE

If you're in Rotterdam on **Tuesday, 14 June**, here's a date for your diary. The Alumni and Corporate Relations office has organised a summer barbecue for fellow alumni and RSM staff to celebrate the summer.

The networking event will be held from 18.00 on the outdoor terrace of Maria's Café in J-building on Woudestein campus (weather permitting).

RSM LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 2011 FOR INSPIRED IDEAS AND NETWORKING

For a half-day 'refresher' providing new inspiration, ideas and contacts to take back to your own work, and a great networking opportunity, don't forget to register for this year's RSM Leadership Summit on



Friday, 7 October, from 14.00 at RSM in Rotterdam.

RSM's Corporate and Alumni Relations office is once again putting together a programme with features they know are popular with attendees. Subjects covered will include: key issues impacting current management – presented and discussed by leaders from academia and international business; inspiring new ideas and information to provide broadened perspectives; panel discussions, interviews and question-and-answer sessions to give participants the opportunity to enter into dialogue directly with high-level speakers from global businesses; and of course networking opportunities with alumni from all of RSM's programmes as well as with executives from international business.

More information is available from [Nicole Eshuis neshuis@rsm.nl](mailto:Nicole.Eshuis@rsm.nl).

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT RSM'S EVENTS AT WWW.RSM.NL/EVENTS

ANNUAL MBA ALUMNI REUNION

This year's MBA Alumni Reunion takes place the day after the 2011 Leadership Summit. We're looking forward to seeing MBA graduates celebrating their 5th, 10th, 15th and 20th anniversaries on **Saturday, October 8** from 11.00 in J-building at RSM. The event is open to alumni from FT1991, FT1996, FT2000, MBA2006, PT2001, EMBA2006, OneMBA2006, MFM2006 and EMB1996. Why not combine business with pleasure by booking a place for the Leadership Summit to refresh your management perspectives, and stay on to enjoy networking with fellow alumni and the best of RSM and Rotterdam in the summer?

For more information email [Irene Broekmans-Versluijs iverluijs@rsm.nl](mailto:Irene.Broekmans-Versluijs@rsm.nl).

86+25 = 2011

Alumni Dik Gussekloo and Ronald Nanninga are organising a reunion for all who started their Bedrijfskunde studies 25 years ago – in 1985, 1986 or 1987. **Saturday, 3rd of September** is the date for your diary, and further details can be found by joining the BedrijfskundeEUR'86+25='11 group on www.Linkedin.com (please note the apostrophes). *Or you can email [Irene Broekmans-Versluijs iverluijs@rsm.nl](mailto:Irene.Broekmans-Versluijs@rsm.nl) in the RSM alumni office to register your interest.*

OUR CANDIDATES ARE READY TO MAKE A SPLASH!



At RSM, you'll find a deep source of world-class international talent for your organisation. Our candidates, drawn from highly-ranked pre- and post-experience programmes, represent more than 80 nationalities, and have acquired a wealth of global business expertise and leadership skills before you ever meet them.

We help you navigate the swift, exciting waters of talent sourcing and recruitment. On- and off-campus careers events, 'miniconsultancies' (such as the Living Management Consulting Project for MBA, or the International Business Project for MSc), and annual career fairs build your organisation's brand with our talent.

Via our personalised services, we can help you find the candidate that 'clicks' for a full-time position, a short-term consultancy project, a research project or an internship.

To connect with pre-experience talent
(BSc, MSc, PhD) contact:
Career Services
Tel +31 10 408 2010
www.rsm.nl/careerservices

To connect with experienced MBA talent,
contact:
MBA Career Development Centre (CDC)
Tel +31 10 408 2222
www.rsm.nl/recruitmba

ROTTERDAM SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
ERASMUS UNIVERSITY



THE ROAD TO REINVENTION



RSM Leadership Summit 2011

Friday 7 October | World Trade Center Rotterdam | The Netherlands

The map of the business world is being redrawn. That's because the rapidly-shifting business landscape of the past few years has made old signposts and well-trodden ways to success irrelevant. New and unexpected pathways to competitive growth can only be forged by those with the courage and daring to take a step towards total transformation: to step onto the Road to Reinvention.

Our keynote speakers will share the ways that reinvention can fuel growth. Their insights will inspire and encourage you on your path.

- **Douglas Baillie** Chief HR Officer, Unilever
- **Guus Dekkers** Chief Information Officer, Airbus
- **Harry van Dorenmalen** Chairman, IBM Europe
- **Soren Hansen** Chief Financial Officer, IKEA

Don't miss the RSM Leadership Summit 2011! Registration is now open.
www.rsm.nl/summit2011

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