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Cover photo: a taxi boat on Mauritius.
The violent storm that has hit infrastructure construction and maintenance sectors in many countries is not over yet. Colas’ work-on-hand is holding up well but, on the whole, visibility remains fairly low. This is why we need to steer a steady course. Unfortunately, markets may once again fall and so I invite each and every one of you to prepare for such prospects with clarity, courage and determination in order to mitigate the impact.

Being prepared is first and foremost a question of fine analysis of our markets, anticipating how they are likely to evolve in 2011 and 2012, a difficult yet essential exercise for everyone. This is how we can form a pertinent strategic vision and an accurate assessment of measures to be taken to help adapt to the new situations. We must identify market segments with the biggest growth potential, reap their potential to the fullest and boost the promotion of innovative techniques and products that set us apart from our competitors. The focus must also remain on profit margins, as well. We must all, at each level of responsibility, show the example. Do not get embroiled in price wars that are raging across the sector, sparked by increasingly fierce competition.

Being prepared also comes down to optimizing structures and organizations and improving project management to increase productivity. We need to focus on reducing overheads and other costs, but not at the expense of investments for the future, project quality or employee and third-party safety. We must make better use of internal control to improve the way we run our operations. Likewise, synergies have to be reinforced both between Group companies – via the free circulation of human resources, materials and equipment within a region, country, or geographic zone – and between lines of business in order to enhance the Colas offer. Build bridges between yourselves and others. Your businesses are complementary so rally together and support one another.

Being prepared is also about, despite the crisis – and even because of the crisis, continuing to recruit young talent and training the men and women of Colas to achieve excellence. Communicate, discuss, motivate, reassure, congratulate, inspire team progress: everyone needs to find meaning in what they do and everyone needs to be on board. More broadly speaking, being prepared means continuing, even accelerating our drive to promote responsible development on every level: ethical, economic, social and environmental. Energy savings, for example, offer three-fold benefits, namely cost reductions, environmental protection and improved road safety.

Lastly – and I cannot emphasize this enough – you must never forget the “fundamentals”, i.e., the rules and procedures that have supported Colas’ profitable growth strategy and brought the Group so much success. The ten years of strong growth we enjoyed prior to the current difficulties may have led some to take their eye off the ball as far as these basics are concerned. I am asking you to get back on track as quickly as possible.

Be an example. Be supportive. Be ready for battle. This is what I expect from you, the men and women at Colas, as we cross this storm.
In January 2009, storm-force winds caused major damage to seawalls on the Mediterranean coast between Port-Vendres and Cerbère, in the Pyrénées-Orientales region of France. Local authorities turned to Civale (Colas Midi-Méditerranée), specialists in this type of work, to carry out the necessary repairs.

Teams reinforced the structure using riprap blocks weighing between 5 and 8 tons for the base, and between 8 and 11 tons for the outer shell. A combined total of 16,000 tons of blocks were used. The second phase of the operation was launched in December to complete the seawall in Port-Vendres. A further 12,000 tons of riprap were used in this phase, completed during the summer of 2010. Ingenuity and vigilance have been the watchwords for teams working on this difficult-to-access site popular with tourists.
Completion of Route RN 1

The RN 1 highway is a strategic route that carries 600 trucks per day delivering goods to Ethiopia from the port of Djibouti. The contract to widen and renovate a 40-km section of the road was won by a consortium that included Colas Djibouti. The teams performed the entire project, from excavation to road marking, signing and hydraulic structures. In addition, wells and bridges were designed to improve living conditions for the local population. A total of two hundred employees worked on this ambitious project which took twenty-four months to complete.
From December 2007 to May 2010, teams from Colas Rhône-Alpes Auvergne, Screg Est, Perrier TP and Aximum worked together to complete a 4-lane section of Route RN 80 between Chalon-sur-Saône and Le Creusot. Around forty people were mobilized at the height of the project, which was part of the much bigger Atlantic Europe Center Route (RCEA) project, linking the Atlantic coast of France with the east of the country. In the Burgundy Côte Chalonnaise wine-growing region, the route taken by the road required the construction of six engineering structures over a 4-km section near the town of Saint-Désert. There was a particularly strong focus on making sure the road fit into its environment.

For example, in one section – almost one kilometer long – the infrastructure was lowered by two meters to blend into the landscape. Likewise, noise barriers erected to muffle traffic noise have been decorated to keep them from spoiling the view!
Valence Airport: ready for take-off!

With a workforce of over 300 people on site, 25,000 aircraft movements per year, a private aviation club and a small military base, Valence-Chabeuil airport plays a significant economic role in the Rhône-Alpes region. However the ageing infrastructure meant that the French civil aviation authority (DGAC) was threatening to withdraw its operating license. The Drôme local authority therefore decided to renovate the site, awarding the contract to Sacer Sud-Est’s Valence profit center and Colas Rhône-Alpes Auvergne’s Ardèche-Drôme center: resurfacing of airport access roads, upgrading of airfield ground lighting and marking to comply with safety standards, creation of a water and fire retardant storage facility for fire-fighting aircraft, etc. For the main runway, the subsidiaries suggested combining the use of Airasphalt® – an asphalt mix specially designed for airfields – with the Colmat® AF process – developed to reduce the risk of cracking – an alternate bid that helped the customer choose the Group!
The Swiss subsidiaries are currently immersed in the Franco-Vaud-Geneva tram project. Colas Genève is part of a consortium responsible for a 1.3-km section of the new Cornavin-Onex-Bernex (TCOB) line, which will run for 6.5 km. The work involves the construction and layout of the underground networks, the platform, stops, sidewalks and roadways… The 45 people working on the project have to cope with the day-to-day difficulties inherent to this type of downtown project. Over and above the obvious safety considerations, the teams need to make sure that the inconvenience to users and neighboring residents is kept to a strict minimum. The new tram line will carry its first passengers at the end of 2011. This isn’t the first time Colas Genève has been involved in this kind of contract as it has already completed a 2.8-km section of the Cornavin-Meyrin-Cern (TCMC) line in the center of Meyrin. Around 20 employees worked on that project, which was completed in under two years. Quite a feat! In addition to the successes notched up by Colas Genève, Flasio has also been awarded contracts to work on three sections of the Geneva tramway.
In the State of Missouri, 200 kilometers south of Saint Louis, a 108-kilometer section of Interstate 55 is being resurfaced. The project – one of the first to be launched as part of the USA’s economic stimulus plan – is being managed by teams from Delta. Launched in July 2009 and broken down into two phases, it should be completed by the end of 2010 and will involve a total of 245,000 tons of asphalt mix. One of the specific features of this project is the use of warm mix, a first in the State of Missouri! More than 70,000 tons of Ecomat® (out of a scheduled total of 140,000 tons) have already been applied, making this the biggest warm mix project ever undertaken by the Group in North America. Manufactured and applied at lower temperatures than conventional hot mix, warm mix technology generates energy savings and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. In 2009, the use of warm mix increased significantly throughout Colas companies in the USA and Canada.

Interstate 55: Delta puts on a show!
Aximum Electronic Products have made it to the Presidential Palace! In February, ten models of EcoFlag flashing lights were delivered to the GSPR (French Presidential security unit). The GSPR, whose job it is to protect the President and his family in France and abroad, is an elite unit made up of police and military police officers, with a fleet of 80 vehicles. After tests on one of the vehicles, EcoFlag’s innovative technique won the day. Fitted with 16 high-power LEDs, EcoFlag is appreciated for its low energy consumption, unparalleled lighting power, easy handling, small size, impact resistance and adaptability to any vehicle, with the added advantage of combining several different types of flashing lights. Finally, the absence of any motor or belt means that the light is silent.

Seen by the GSPR as the best solution on the market, EcoFlag now hopes to attract interest from other services, such as French SWAT teams, local police departments, etc.

FRANCE

EcoFlag at the Elysée Palace
Teams from Colas Hungaria have been working on the M31 highway construction project since October 2008. The route will provide a link between the M0 and M3 highways in the eastern suburbs of Budapest. Largely funded by the European Union, the work — mobilizing some 400 employees — involves building a 12.4-km four-lane section of freeway, including entrance and exit ramps and bridges. The new infrastructure will relieve congestion on the East section of the M0 highway which currently handles ever-increasing volumes of traffic from major routes, leaving residents in surrounding neighborhoods to enjoy a much improved living environment.

Panhard: warm mix asphalt wins the day

The Panhard logistics platform project in Le Coudray-Montceaux, just south of Paris, saw teams from Screg Ile-de-France-Normandie clearing and treating 120,000 m² of soil. They also applied 10,000 tons of warm mix asphalt, which helped save 173 tons of CO₂ equivalent, along with hydrocarbon separators to treat rain water.
Route RD 332: a sustainable road

The renovation project along coastal Route RD 332 between Gruissan and Narbonne-Plage being conducted by Screg Sud-Est teams is a clear reflection of the Regional Council’s drive to promote sustainable development. The project involves the use of the Recycold® technique (on-site recycling of materials from the old roadway) and the application of Ecoflex warm mixes.
Contracted by the French Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and the Sea, teams from Colas Midi-Méditerranée, Perrier TP (Colas Rhône-Alpes Auvergne) and Aximum are currently working together on the construction of a 10.7-km section of the A75 highway between Pézenas and Béziers, including around thirty engineering structures. One of the aspects that makes this colossal project stand out is its innovative dimension, with the application of 3E® LT energy-efficient asphalt mix. Manufactured and applied at temperatures 40 to 45°C lower than those for traditional mixes, the use of these warm mixes generates energy savings of between 15 and 25%, and also substantially cuts greenhouse gas emissions (by around 20%). Another innovative feature is the use of a recycling technique to incorporate reclaimed asphalt pavement (20%). Carried out within the framework of a 3E®+R (“R” for recycling) innovation charter, the first 1.2-km section of highway was delivered in February 2009. The second 9.5-km section will require 1.2 million cubic meters of earthworks and 155,000 tons of 3E®+R mix and is due for completion in 2011.
Work to extend the Cairo subway continues and Colas Rail is once again involved in the project. Following the construction of lines 1 and 2 between 1981 and 2005, and the first phase of line 3 in 2007, Colas Rail, as principal of a consortium also involving Alstom Transport, Alstom Egypt, Thales Transportation Systems, as well as Egyptian companies, Arab Contractors and Orascom, won the contract for the second phase of line 3. The project involves the construction of a 7.12-km section of tunnel and four underground stations. Colas Rail is responsible for installing the electromechanical systems, energy distribution, control and communication systems and train maintenance equipment. It is also in charge of testing, commissioning, staff training and maintenance throughout the two-year warranty period. With a total length of 39 km and 33 stations along its route, line 3 will ultimately link the Cairo airport lying to the north-east of the city to the Imbaba residential district in the west, and to the Governorate of Giza. Five further phases of work are scheduled over the next fifteen years to complete the entire line. ■
Colas Ltd is always up for a challenge! And the taxiway renovation project at the main airport on the Isle of Man – between Great Britain and Ireland – is yet another example of this. The teams were faced with three imperatives: air traffic could not be disrupted, the work had to be completed on budget and the environmental impact needed to be kept to a strict minimum. The client was particularly keen to ensure that no site waste be trucked off the premises to avoid constant vehicle traffic. As a result 100% of the materials recycled from the old courses were reused in the new structure. Total CO₂ emissions and energy consumption were cut by 45% and 32% respectively compared with standard techniques and the project costs were 40% lower. “More environmentally-friendly, safer, cheaper”: these three benefits of responsible development are clearly illustrated at the Isle of Man project, an approach already perfected by Colas Ltd on other airport contracts in the United Kingdom.

Light-colored asphalt mixes for the A86 highway tunnel

The tunnel construction project on the A86 highway between Rueil-Malmaison and Versailles west of Paris is one of the biggest underground road projects currently underway in Europe. It is due to be completed by the end of 2010. Teams from Colas Ile-de-France Normandie will have applied 180,000 m² of light-colored, noise-reducing, heavy duty skid-resistant asphalt, for increased safety, greater energy savings and improved comfort.
His Majesty King Mohammed VI has tasked the Bouregreg Valley Development Agency with the creation of two tram lines in the Rabat-Salé conglomeration. These two lines, which are 19 kilometers long and have 31 stations along their route, will link the country’s capital, Rabat, with Salé, located on the other side of the Bouregreg River. Work began in April 2008, with the Moroccan road subsidiary GTR contracted to construct the tramway platforms while Colas Rail is laying the tracks. Road-widening, earthworks, surfacing… 330 GTR employees are working tirelessly to meet the deadline. The 130 Colas Rail employees are working flat out too, laying 55,000 sleepers and 4,500 tons of track. The tram service, due to be up and running by the end of 2010, is expected to radically cut traffic congestion between the two cities.
Between May 2008 and April 2010, teams from Smac Eurofaçade's Vitrolles profit center built the roofing and façades of the Fos-sur-Mer waste recycling center. An interesting feature of this project was the use of a helicopter to lift materials into difficult-to-access zones.
Built in the middle of the 19th century, the fort of Issy-les-Moulineaux was one of 19 military structures designed to defend Paris. Partially destroyed during the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, it was recently acquired by the city so that it could be transformed into an HEQ (High Environmental Quality) residential cyber-district. The Conflans SNPR profit center and Brunel Démolition, two subsidiaries of Colas Ile-de-France-Normandie and both demolition specialists, were contracted to carry out the demolition component of the project. Launched in September 2009, the operations lasted seven months. It was painstaking work due to the potential presence of explosive shells left over from the Franco-Prussian war. It was only after the intervention of a company specializing in the clearance of explosive devices that teams were able to begin knocking down the 25 buildings (including one covering a surface area of 15,000 m²), two ammunition stores and a bunker. In total, 350 tons of asbestos materials, 4,000 m³ of wood waste, 6,000 m³ of rubble and 20,000 m³ of concrete were removed. In a few years time, this historic 12-hectare site will spring back to life as a “digital stronghold.”
Nanosoft®, the latest-generation noise-reducing asphalt mix, no longer requires any introduction. Last autumn, a demonstration of its effectiveness was conducted on Route 2020 (the former RN 20) by Colas Centre-Ouest teams from Orléans on behalf of the Loiret Regional Council. 22,000 m² of Nanosoft® were used on a section of road near the commune of Olivet. The target was to significantly cut noise pollution in a residential area where traffic is particularly dense. Prior to the application of this product, recorded noise levels were around 102 dB(A). Today the readings are closer to 88 dB(A) at 90 km/h. Nanosoft® has also increased skid-resistance, reducing braking distances by around 30%.

FRANCE

And silence reigns on the Route 2020

S11: a doubly innovative project

For the construction of a 5-km section of the S11 expressway between Poznan and Kórnik, Colas Polska teams used Nanosoft® noise-reducing asphalt mix as well as Colgrip® and Ruflex® safety surfacing.
The Vanne Aqueduct: express service!

The 173 km-long Vanne aqueduct has been supplying Paris with drinking water since the 19th century. It runs underground for most of its length, with just 14 km of arcades, channeling water from the river of the same name in the Troyes region. In the Fall of 2009, hydraulic engineering teams from Spac Aulnay carried out work on a 500-m section of arcades in Moret-sur-Loing. Two pipes with a diameter of 1,100 mm were removed and replaced following bridge repairs to make the structure watertight. The whole operation was completed in just a month!
The Dawson City project in the Yukon, directly linked to the effects of global warming, has proved to be a fine example of Franco-Canadian synergy. The work, which was contracted to teams from Skookum Asphalt Ltd. (Terus Construction Ltd.), involved resurfacing the town’s main road. Until then, vehicles had traveled on permafrost (frozen ground). The teams opted for a surfacing made with light colored Bituclair® binder. In addition to its visual appeal, the light color reflects the sun’s rays back off the surface, whereas dark asphalt mixes would have absorbed them, thereby accelerating permafrost melt. The formulation of Bituclair®, used for the first time in North America, was adjusted by the Colas Campus for Science and Techniques in France to cope with extreme temperatures. Teams from Colas Midi-Méditerranée then took over to manufacture the product and ship the containers over to Vancouver. A landmark of Canada’s national heritage since the 19th century gold rush, Dawson City has now also become a flagship project for Bituclair® in North America!
It isn’t just sports facilities in South Africa that are reaping the benefits of the Soccer World Cup. A large part of the overall investment has been dedicated to modernizing the country’s road network, with a number of projects, including the upgrading of freeway sections and the construction of additional lanes, emergency lanes and multi-level interchanges… all with the same deadline of June 2010!

Colas South Africa – whose activities are primarily industrial – and its Johannesburg profit center have seen their modified bitumen production increase by almost 70% compared with last year. In the space of just four months, 40,000 tons of bitumen binders have also been sold. Quite a feat, despite the unfavorable weather conditions and successive shutdowns of the country’s refineries for maintenance purposes. Ultimately, all this upgrading work will have a number of positive effects, with improved road safety as well as economic and social benefits. In particular, it is likely to promote the development of less dynamic regions. The work has already helped generate numerous jobs.
FRANCE

The seafront in Les Sables d’Olonne gets a facelift

The Screg Ouest profit center in Les Sables d’Olonne has been working on the town’s seafront promenade renovation project since October 2009. So far, 8,000 m² of paving stones and 2,200 m² of asphalt mix have been laid and numerous shrubs and bushes have been planted. The second phase of the project is due to begin in October 2010.

TOGO

The Aflao road, crossing borders

A vast project to rehabilitate and modernize the road infrastructure linking Benin to Ghana via Togo is underway. The objective is to improve traffic conditions and promote trade in this region of West Africa. Colas Benin secured the contract for the Aflao road, a 9-km section of the route starting at the Ghanaian border and finishing near the port of Lomé, the capital of Togo. The work involves rehabilitating and building a 4-lane urban freeway with a median strip. In order to perform the work, Colas Benin has created an entity in Togo. It has also brought over numerous machines as well as several asphalt plants, concrete plants and crushers. A quarry has been opened 45 km from Lomé to supply the site. In total, 300 people will have been mobilized for the project.
Colas has been operating on Mauritius Island for thirty years. This Indian Ocean paradise, whose economy is partly dependent on tourism, is enjoying a growth boom. Numerous projects are currently being launched, offering some great opportunities for Mauritian subsidiaries.
REINFORCING TEAMS
In addition to the back-up provided by Colas’ other companies in the Indian Ocean region, Colas Maurice recruits and trains new employees on the island to carry out its projects there.
Bewitching scenery and some major investment and infrastructure renovation programs…

More than ever before, Mauritius can be seen as a Garden of Eden in a zone – the Indian Ocean – currently plagued by unrest. Business is flourishing on the island, in stark contrast with the slow-down in Madagascar (due to the turbulent political situation) and on Reunion Island, which is in the throes of an economic recession.

Colas has been working on the island since the early 1980s, when GTE and its Indian Ocean companies joined the Group. Today, Colas operates in Mauritius via three subsidiaries: Colas Maurice L.tée, Transinvest Mauritius Ltd and BBC (Bulk Bitumen Container). “Road construction projects account for 70% of our business, with building and civil engineering representing 15% and the remaining 15% dedicated to the development of private housing”, explains Mario Dalla Favera, General Manager of Colas Maurice. “BBC’s business is bulk bitumen sales, with Colas Maurice and Transinvest accounting for 95% of its revenue.” Colas’ Mauritian businesses are adapted to the specific characteristics of the region: the official language is English; its population is mainly Indian, but also African, Chinese and French, and the markets are often governed by the FIDIC (International Federation of Consulting Engineers) legal framework.

An unprecedented boom

Mauritius’ economic boom has led to new needs in terms of road infrastructure. Today, its network has reached saturation. Supported in particular by a variety of financial backers (European Union, the French Development Agency, etc.), the State of Mauritius aims to transform the country’s roads and establish a modern, environmentally-friendly network by 2020. “This dynamic drive has generated a number of projects – both public and private – and we’re likely to see sustained activity in the road infrastructure and other related sectors over the next five to ten years”, continues Mario Dalla Favera. The result of all this is that Colas Maurice has been enjoying an unprecedented boom in business since the end of 2008.

Many large-scale road projects

Colas Maurice is currently working on several major road projects designed to relieve traffic congestion. In addition to the 7-km Triplet bypass and the widening of a 4-km stretch of freeway at the south entrance of Port-Louis, the construction of the capital’s ring road was launched at the end of February 2010. And mid-May saw the start of the Terre Rouge-Verdun project, which will provide islanders with a brand new 16-km highway linking the north and south access to Port-Louis. Other projects include the widening of a 7-km stretch of the A13 highway between Port-Louis and en route.
> Pamplemousses and Forbach, the refurbishment of a 3-km section and the construction of 3.5 km of new roads between Phoenix and Beaux-Songes. Further major projects are set to be launched over the coming months, such as the East-West highway (three sections), the new airport runway and taxiway, and various road maintenance contracts.

Synergies and training

In response to this increase in business and to carry out the contracts secured, Colas Maurice needs to reinforce its teams. But it is finding it difficult to hire qualified personnel in the relevant professions locally. To overcome this problem, the subsidiary has resorted to two solutions. Firstly, there is a great deal of solidarity in the Colas network within the Indian Ocean zone: subsidiaries in the region are quite used to exploiting synergies to adapt to fluctuating business or manpower and equipment requirements. Today, Colas Madagascar, GTOI (Reunion Island) and Colas Mayotte are often called upon by Colas Maurice and teams are sent out to help. Colas Madagascar’s
Mauritius has also seen a significant increase in the number of building projects. Seen here is the Rivière-Noire shopping mall construction project.
TRIOLET RING ROAD
The people living in Triolet, the longest village on the Island of Mauritius, are eagerly awaiting the completion of the ring road to relieve traffic congestion there.
A NEW SET OF BEARINGS

At the age of 27, Matthieu d’Aubert, a Project Engineer with Colas since September 2006, has been sent to work overseas for the first time. After a Screg “Tour de France” training period, followed by two and a half years in Saint-Nazaire, he arrived in Mauritius in mid-January this year. It was quite a culture shock! “I wanted to explore new horizons and get experience in projects on a different scale”, explains Matthieu. “And I haven’t been disappointed! I’m currently working on the Ring Road project. The way the whole thing is organized is quite new to me.” A dedicated structure and a complete special unit have been set up for the project. Full of enthusiasm, Matthieu appreciates the freedom he has to take the initiative: “I’m learning to work more independently. What’s more, I’ve got to get to grips with a different regulatory structure and another way of life.” A whole new set of bearings to acquire!

A HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Jean-François Crescence is a site foreman. Born and raised on Reunion Island, this forty year-old has worked his way up through the ranks since joining the Group in 1995, as a worker. “I was sent to Mauritius to help on the Nautica project in September 2009. It was the first time I’d worked away from home! It was tough in the beginning, but I’ve settled down and am quite happy with the change now”, explains Jean-François. Initially, he was meant to stay for just four months, but this was extended. The Nautica project, involving the construction of 8,000 m² of shops and offices as well as a 2,000 m² parking lot, is a first for Mauritius in that only walled concrete is being used. Effective human resources management is crucial to the project’s success. Jean-François hired some thirty people locally to form his team. “I had to use all my experience to choose the best. It’s been very fulfilling.”

New developments

Colas Maurice is seizing the opportunities offered by this favorable context to speed up the modernization of its methods, improve its training programs, optimize the structure of its associated services and introduce new Group products and expertise. In particular, the company wants to enhance its range of products and services, turning to more environmentally-friendly techniques. “We’re also making preparations to expand our crushing activity”, adds Mario Dalla Favera.

> laboratory and GTOI’s Methods Department also lend their support. Secondly, Colas Maurice develops training programs for new employees hired locally. “There are four strands to our approach here: assessing skills, identifying needs, determining personal goals and drawing up a training plan”, explains Mario Dalla Favera. The majority of the subsidiary’s needs lie in their core professions: machine operators, land surveyors, draftsmen, and foremen. The training is also a way of consolidating skills already acquired.

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The Reims tram system will be up and running in April 2011. A PPP project, to which Colas – a shareholder in the MARS concession holder – has contributed its civil engineering and rail expertise via Colas Est, Screg Est and Colas Rail subsidiaries, all members of the construction consortium.

On March 26, the first Reims tram – decorated entirely in pink – went on display on the plaza fronting the city’s cathedral. Brass bands, street artists and choirs provided entertainment throughout the day… before the tram was toasted with champagne! Reims Métropole and MARS (Mobilité agglomération rémoise, or Greater Reims Mobility), the concession holder for the Reims urban transport network, were keen to celebrate the start of the operational phase of a project that was launched some time ago.

The tram system, a must

The idea of building a tram system in Reims first came to be way back in the early 1960s, but it wasn’t until September 2003 that the preliminary studies were launched and the project finally began to take shape. The people of Reims were consulted between December 2003 and January 2005 and gave the project the thumbs up. The calls for bids process then followed, with the MARS consortium (of which Colas is a member) securing the contract in July 2006. Following the completion of archeological digs and the issue of the service order in May 2008, work finally got underway.

The tram system cannot come soon enough for a city whose downtown area is choked by pollution and traffic congestion, and in which some neighborhoods have very little public transport. What’s more, the public transport that does exist has reached saturation point. The city’s authorities aim to make travel much easier via intermodal passenger transport. The line will thus serve hubs that generate high levels of traffic, such as the future administrative district, the Comédie de Reims theater, the Auguste-Delaune stadium, Léo-Lagrange park, the Courlancy polyclinic, etc. Ultimately, the tram is set to serve 70,000 people, i.e., roughly one-third of the population of the city and its suburbs.
THE FIRST TESTS

The tram system’s infrastructure is now ready for the first tests to be conducted. The 18 tram cars, the fronts of which are shaped like champagne glasses, will begin carrying passengers in April 2011.
and its suburbs, a population that includes more than 15,000 students.

**Public-private partnership**

The legal framework for the Reims tram project represents a first in France for this type of infrastructure, since the contract covers the design, construction, operation and financing of the network. "It means the concession holder has four times the responsibilities!" comments Alain Desvaux, the civil engineering group’s Production Director. The MARS consortium is made up of Colas and Bouygues TP for the civil engineering aspects; Alstom Transport for the rolling stock and electromechanical equipment; the Caisse d’Epargne Champagne-Ardenne and Natixis for the finance; SNC-Lavalin Pingat Ingénierie for the design and project management, as well as the French Deposit and Consignment Office.

The construction consortium includes a civil engineering section made up of Colas Est, Screg Est, Bouygues TP, Quille and Pertuy Construction; a subgroup made up of Alstom Transport and Colas Rail for the track; and an electromechanical and rolling stock division with Alstom Transport.

The civil engineering section itself is split into three divisions: Buildings, Engineering Structures and Main Services (network of public works, roads, sewers and water services). It will ultimately have designed and built the infrastructure for the entire tram system.

**The urban landscape given a brand new look**

The civil engineering teams launched the urban...
redevelopment work in May 2008. “The construction of a tram system changes the whole look of a city”, observes Alain Desvaux. “The project is an opportunity to renovate the streets, improve public spaces and redistribute areas dedicated to different transport modes.”

For example, bike paths have been created along a 7-km section of the route. But greenery also has its place in urban redevelopment on this scale. Be it in Bordeaux, Lille, Paris and now Reims, the grass is growing wherever the tram goes! 60% of the platform will be seeded with grass and trees will be planted close by. The other distinguishing feature of the system relates to the clear identification of areas reserved for the tram to optimize safety: the mineral pavements have been given a different color to that used on the other roads; similarly, clear borders have been established on either side of the track to define the obstacle clearance limit, i.e., the distance users have to allow when a tram is passing. The Main Services teams have been responsible for the roads, sidewalks, 3 parking lots (1,000 spaces) and a maintenance center, which was opened in May 2010.

Track laying
The new Reims tram system will run on electricity, mainly via an aerial power supply but a 2-km section between place de la République and the Theater will have a ground power supply. Reims is the third city in France – following Bordeaux and Angers – to have opted for this innovative and perfectly secure method, combining esthetics, technol-
Several techniques have been implemented in Reims. Here, a traditional method is being used, whereby the tracks are laid on sleepers and held 6 cm above the ground by rods while the concrete is poured.
Stéphane Doutre joined Screg Est in 2001. A project engineer in Reims, followed by a stint as Operations Supervisor in Châlons-en-Champagne, Stéphane is now Project Manager of the Main Services division (network of public works, roads, sewers and water services) on the tram construction site. His role is to supervise 13 project engineers and 40 site teams, draw up procedures, monitor interfaces with subgroups, manage subcontractors, ensure deadlines are met as well as compliance with safety standards, etc.

“The most difficult aspect is the fact that we’re working with buses running on normal schedules, which greatly hinders teams, particularly in terms of work coordination and finishing.”

Stéphane remains impressed by the technical expertise mobilized around the project. “The Reims tram project is a learning environment! This project involves design, construction and operation: synergies between subsidiaries play a crucial role.”

Efficient organization
An average of 400 people per day have been working on the project for more than three years. When so many people are working together on the same site — and more importantly when so many different professions have to be coordinated — an effective organizational structure is crucial. “We set up several cells to manage site operations and oversee relations with local residents and traders”, explains Alain Desvaux. “On a site of this type, there’s no room for improvisation!” The first tests were launched in April 2010 and the system is expected to go into full service in April 2011.

Nicolas Peltier, a young Project Engineer with Colas Est, the Reims tram project has been a great opportunity to build on his knowledge: “This is my first urban project. I really do learn something new every day!” Nicolas needs to be able to visualize the entire project at any given time in order to manage the budget, meet the deadlines, comply with safety standards, etc. Quite a remit, between management, scheduling, and coordination, etc.

“It’s a lot of stress and there are quite a few challenges!” he emphasizes. “We have to accommodate bus traffic and make sure machines operate safely in a pedestrian environment. At the start, we were living the project round the clock seven days a week. Experience helps you to step back and cope better with pressure.” The presence of different subsidiaries on the site is anything but a hindrance: “This is all about teamwork where we all benefit from each other’s expertise.”

Nicolas Peltier
A first experience with lots of responsibility
For Nicolas Peltier, a young Project Engineer with Colas Est, the Reims tram project has been a great opportunity to build on his knowledge: “This is my first urban project. I really do learn something new every day!”

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Stéphane Doutre
Pooling knowledge
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Daniel Ribout
All the usual constraints of rail projects
The Rouen Metro bus (tram system), the Meteor (automated subway) project in Paris, the TVR tram system in Nancy, the Lyon, Mulhouse and Nice tram systems, the Marseille subway… In fifteen years on the job, Daniel Ribout, Project Engineer at Colas Rail’s Ollainville urban rail network profit center, has been involved in many rail projects. Suffice it to say that he has been in his element with the Reims tram project. “Traffic on and around the site, the highest possible vigilance with respect to pedestrians and residents, deadlines to be met, staying on budget, employee safety… This is a classic project on all fronts, with all the usual constraints”; observes Daniel Ribout. In Reims, Colas Rail opted to develop a traditional laying technique (see article above). In total, 2,500 tons of rails have been laid along the 11-km route.
QSE officers, profit-center managers, laboratory supervisors, team leaders... they all do their jobs with enthusiasm and have decided to share their daily routine and projects with us.

MOUNIRE HANNACHI
EQUIPMENT MANAGER
COLAS MARTINIQUE
MARTINIQUE

In 2005, Mounire Hannachi had been a civil engineering sector technician for some ten years. It was while on personal training leave that he decided to apply for a place at the Cesi engineering school in Lyon-Ecully. This coincided with being called for an interview at Colas. “I was offered a job as a foreman,” he explains. “At the time, I was waiting to find out whether or not I’d gotten into the engineering school. We agreed that I should get back into contact once I’d graduated if my application was successful!” In 2007, the Group came back to him, offering him a senior year internship as equipment engineer with Colas Martinique. He was then hired on a permanent contract as equipment manager, a role he thrives on: “Technical expertise, management, team supervision... I love how diverse the job is. You have to keep your ear to the ground, go out to see the machines in operation, discuss any problems with operators and drivers as soon as they come up, etc.” A keen diving enthusiast, Mounire enjoys taking his family on vacation to discover new countries.

“Your have to keep your ear to the ground”
At Colas you learn something new every day.

AHMED BAKI
LABORATORY MANAGER
GTR
MOROCCO

With a degree in chemistry, Ahmed Baki joined Colas Morocco in 1978 and learned about the products and techniques used by the Group. Since then, he’s been testing them out in the laboratory (Ahmed is now laboratory manager at the Fès profit center) prior to their application on Morocco’s roads. Ahmed has worked on dozens of major projects including the re-routing of the Al Wahda dam road, the Sidi Kacem to Meknès widening project and the runway at Oujda airport, to name but a few. His knowledge of binders and asphalt mixes combined with his many years spent in laboratories mean he’s more than qualified to take young people under his wing for job training: “If someone is passionate about the profession, success will come easily,” he explains. “I advise anyone who has ended up here by mistake to think again about what they really want to do.” Ahmed refuses to budge on this point with his apprentices: as far as he’s concerned, being in charge of a laboratory is a vocation. And don’t think for a minute that after all these years Ahmed has done all he can do. “At Colas you learn something new every day. And I’ll never have enough time to know everything there is to know!” he laughs.
CHRISTOPHE SIMON  
CONSTRUCTION MANAGER  
SCREG OUEST  
FRANCE

Christophe Simon was introduced to the world of roads as a kid: “My father was a grader operator,” he explains. “He taught me all about the profession.” So Christophe’s path was mapped out from the outset. Having graduated from the Ecole Centrale engineering school in Paris in 2006, he secured an internship with Screg Ile-de-France–Normandie. He started out as assistant foreman and then foreman. Next, he moved on to do Screg’s Tour de France, before joining Screg Ouest. Project engineer at the Nantes profit center for a year, Christophe was then appointed construction manager for the Sacer Atlantique/Screg Ouest/Colas Centre-Ouest group working on the Angers tram project, supervising between 60 and 90 people. His job is to ensure the project advances smoothly, both technically and financially. These responsibilities can be written down to his own hard work, of course, but also to the faith the Group places in young people. “It’s a fantastic opportunity,” acknowledges Christophe. “The experience is made even better by the fact that there is a real team spirit on the project, which makes it easier to deal with the many challenges we face.”

“The Group has faith in young people”
Loyalty is much more than just a word for Guy Sarrasin: “After forty years of loyal service at Colas, it’s time to retire,” he says. Hired back in 1970 as a foreman in the Nièvre region of France, he later became project engineer in Bourges, and then profit center manager in La Brionne, in the Creuse region. As luck would have it, his retirement coincides with the completion in the region of a project he has spent twenty years working on: the Atlantic Europe Center Route project (RCEA). “I’ll have done 80 km of the RCEA,” he states proudly. “The final section will be delivered soon and then I’m off.” As far as Guy is concerned, the road – crossing the region from East to West – is partly the story of his life. “I’ve trained lots of youngsters on this fantastic project. Some have gone on to make brilliant careers for themselves. The RCEA has been like a Colas school!” This keen hunter and traveler will leave the region at the end of the year to move closer to his daughter and grandchildren. He looks back at his time spent on various projects with a touch of nostalgia, but, above all, with a sense of pride in a mission accomplished: “I’d promised myself that I’d finish the RCEA before retiring. Job done! Today, I start a new chapter.”
At the age of 33, Audrey Sanchez has already worked in four of the Group’s subsidiaries. This outstanding “globetrotter” joined Colas in 2000. “I was taken on by Screg Est, working as a temp in the quality department. My job was to compile the documentary system in accordance with ISO 9001 standards.” In 2002, Audrey continued working with Screg Sud-Est and at the same time followed a part-time training course at the European Total Quality Institute in Rodez. “I was moving around a lot back then,” she explains. And in 2004, she was back on the road, this time heading for Toulouse, where she took up the post of QSE officer with Colas Midi-Méditerranée. There her job included setting up an environmental and safety management system and communicating with employees. So was this the end of the road? Not quite. “In 2007, I expressed a desire to move closer to my family in the Lorraine region of northeast France,” she explains. “The Group was more than accommodating, offering me a position with Colas Est!” Audrey is safety officer for the subsidiary. As such, she advises and supports the Group’s business units in the setting up and monitoring of prevention initiatives, goes out to job sites, manages relations with external prevention organizations, etc. All in all, she has a pretty full schedule but still manages to find time to indulge in her favorite sport, badminton.
"Head in the stars!"

JEAN VOIRIN
LABORATORY MANAGER
SCREG EST
FRANCE

By day, Jean Voirin is a laboratory manager with Screg Est in Nancy. Having initially graduated with a building draftsman degree, he then went on to obtain a civil engineering degree followed by a PhD. Much of his time is spent studying mixes with hydraulic and hydrocarbon binders, as well as soils and aggregates. Jean also carries out research work at the Group’s Campus for Science and Techniques (CST), in the Paris area. But by night, at the end of his day’s work, he devotes himself to his great passion: astronomy. Planets, asteroids, galaxies, comets, nebulae… the sky holds no secrets for this night bird who admits to only being able to sleep for a few hours at a time. “I’m a member of the Côtes de Meuse Observatory Association, which has one of the biggest telescopes in Europe open to the public,” explains Jean. “I’ve also been carrying out my own personal research for the last fifteen years, with a specific focus on CCD astronomic photography and computerization of the images obtained.” When not behind the eyepiece of his telescope, he can often be found on the summits of the Vosges Mountains taking part in Star Parties. “Clear skies, total darkness and light winds are ideal conditions for stargazing!”

ROUTES No. 25 – September 2010
MATHIAS CAZAUX
FOREMAN
SMAC
FRANCE

Twenty-five years of rugby. Seventeen years of waterproofing. Mathias Cazaux’s two passions draw on the same values. “The same virtues can be found on job sites and in sports: solidarity, fighting spirit and selflessness,” he explains. Mathias Cazaux joined Smac at the age of 21. The young man started out on a temporary contract but his desire to learn and progress was noticed from an early stage. “I went on every training course offered. In 1994, I obtained a vocational certificate in waterproof surfacing before going on to obtain a technical certificate in waterproofing for the building and civil engineering sectors.” He won his spurs on the Leclerc car lot extension project in Blagnac. “Initially scheduled to last four months, the project was completed two months early. From my point of view this project was a benchmark.” Recognized for his human qualities, natural authority and professional capacities, in 2007 Mathias was selected to join the skilled workers’ guild, Les compagnons de l’Arche, a great honor. “Members of the guild make sure that job sites are maintained in tip-top condition in terms of quality and safety,” he sums up. Mathias has moved up the ranks, going from unskilled worker to foreman.
Armed with his civil engineering degree, Jérôme Quilhac went along to an interview at Colas Rail’s profit center in Toulouse one winter’s evening (at that time, Colas’ rail subsidiary was called Seco-Rail). “I remember it well… the offices were almost empty. The business needed to be developed and employees hired.” Under the watchful eye of the profit center’s dynamic manager, the young graduate made a bet on the future and took the plunge. “The challenge ahead of me proved to be a wonderful career opportunity.” Once the sites had been redeveloped and new offices installed, Jérôme set about securing rail contracts in the region. “To begin with, we focused on smaller projects that we were capable of handling,” he explains. “The idea was to get to know the market better and establish skilled, close-knit teams. We gradually began to make a name for ourselves in the region and now our services are increasingly in demand.” As a sign of this success, the workforce at the Toulouse profit center has increased from 20 to 60 people in the space of just a few years. A fantastic human and professional adventure!
“My vocation? To train youngsters”

MARC BEAUVENETRE
ENGINEERING & DESIGN OFFICE MANAGER
COLAS NORD-PICARDIE FRANCE

Marc Beauventre joined Colas Nord-Picardie back in 1993. It wasn’t long before this design manager for the Artois-based profit centers was demonstrating an aptitude for passing on his experience to the younger generations. On the advice of one of the profit center managers, he applied for a post as part-time lecturer at the University of Artois teaching road structure. “Several of the many hundreds of students I’ve taught have gone on to have fabulous careers with Colas or in other companies and design offices,” he enthuses. Another source of immense satisfaction for him is that he was one of the driving forces behind the setting up of the Group’s computerized jobsite management system (Siroco), overseeing its successful implementation. And this despite the fact that for someone who has always been a stickler for using a pencil and paper, the transition to Siroco didn’t come easily. “Back at the start I was far from convinced. I didn’t appreciate the potential benefits of this new software. But, over time, I got used to it and changed my mind: I can see the importance of this technological progress.” At the end of the year, Marc will be heading off into retirement, and an active one at that! “I’m going to be working as a volunteer for an association that helps young people start their own businesses.” One thing is clear, his thirst to teach is far from quenched.
Synergy within Colas is very much alive and kicking and Martin Ole Korsgaard knows it!
In January 2008, just a year after joining Colas Danmark A/S, this young chemical engineer spent four weeks in France at the Campus for Science and Techniques (CST) in Magny-les-Hameaux, near Paris. “I came to polish up on my knowledge and get some training in bitumen, binders, processes and techniques used by the Group”, recalls Martin. “The aim of the trip was also to take back to Denmark some of the innovative products being developed in France.”
He learned a great deal from his French colleagues. “The CST is a platform where the Group’s research experts can exchange knowledge and expertise. The experience has served me well.” Now back in Denmark, Martin tests the ‘made in France’ innovations – particularly Vegecol® and 3E® asphalt mixes – on Danish roads to ascertain whether they can function effectively in the harsh Danish winter. Martin’s other role is to train his colleagues and suppliers in the techniques he picked up in France.
“You could say I’m a purveyor of expertise”, he jokes. “What’s more, I spend some of my time keeping an eye on the latest research being conducted in France. Which no doubt means I will have to go back to Paris in the future!”
Spac: a key link in the energy and water transport chain

Pipelines, mains, gas compressor and storage stations…

Spac specializes in the construction of fluid transport infrastructures and is now reaping the benefits of operating in a booming sector.
reated in 1945 and a Colas company since 1993, Spac is widely recognized for its knowledge and expertise in the field of pipe construction. "We build networks to carry energy and water: natural gas, industrial gases, hydrocarbons, brine, chemical products, drinking and industrial water, etc.," sums up Gilles de Bagneux, the company’s president. In the energy field, the products and services are aimed at industrial customers, such as natural gas transport and distribution subsidiaries (GRTgaz and GrDF, owned by GDF Suez, and TIGF, owned by Total). Water and environmental services are aimed at public sector – water distribution and treatment companies, local authorities – and private customers alike.

Local and major projects

Spac’s aim has been to establish its local credentials throughout the country, backed by a network of nine regional profit centers across France. Some of its most recent references include the extension of the urban heating network as part of the T3 Paris tramway construction project between Porte de Vincennes and Porte de la Chapelle, the construction of a new high-voltage underground link in Toulon for RTE, the French electricity transmission system operator, and the installation of a rainwater runoff recovery system in Crozon, in the Finistère region of northwest France. Spac is also developing a major projects branch based at the Bordeaux profit center, which covers all of France, but sometimes crosses borders, too.
For example, in Belgium, teams are currently building a pipeline – 86.3 km long and 1,000 mm in diameter – along with ancillary equipment for Fluxys, the Belgian gas transport network operator.

Multiple expertise

Spac draws on four principal fields of technical expertise: excavation, lifting, welding and civil engineering. Other fields such as electricity and trench-free technology also play a key role. Historically Spac has built its reputation on the successful completion of major pipeline construction projects. How does a company set about on projects of this size? At a rate of over one kilometer per day, mobile teams launch the installation process, with other teams coming in thereafter or working in
Quality, safety, environment

Faced with the increasingly demanding specifications of industrial customers and as part of its already long-standing commitment to responsible development, Spac has established a “quality, safety, environment” structure in all its profit centers and on major projects.

Spac teams are working in the north of Paris on the extension of the urban heating network as part of the T3 tramway construction project, between Porte de Vincennes and Porte de la Chapelle.

parallel. The first stage involves creating a construction access road for heavy machines. Trench excavation work can then begin. Pipes, brought to the site by rail, are loaded and unloaded all along the planned pipeline route. These are known as “stringing” operations. Land surveyors take readings and pipe fitters mark instructions on each section of pipe. Some pipes have to be bent to make sure they fit perfectly into the path. After the crucial welding phase, pipes are installed at a depth of around 1.2 meters using machines specifically designed for the purpose. Welding operations determine how fast the line advances. Once the pipeline has been installed, filling operations can begin to restore the land to its original state. A system of markers is used so that the pipeline route can be easily identified at a later date.

SEVEC:
HEAVY PRE-FABRICATION

Located in La Châtre, in the Indre Department of central France, Segec is one of Spac’s subsidiaries, specializing in prefabricated reinforced concrete. Thanks to its expertise, Spac is able to carry out civil engineering projects and offer specific pre-fabrication solutions (girders, lintels, joists, pillars, steps, supporting structures, bridge abutments, cornices, etc.) at competitive prices.

Quality, safety, environment

Faced with the increasingly demanding specifications of industrial customers and as part of its already long-standing commitment to responsible development, Spac has established a “quality, safety, environment” structure in all its profit centers and on major projects.
projects. “Oil and gas operators don’t give companies a second glance if their safety records aren’t up to scratch”, explains Gilles de Bagneux. In 2009, Spac saw a significant improvement in its safety rating, which fell from 12.73 to 1.64.

**New avenues for development**

Over the years, Spac has developed and expanded its expertise in order to adapt its range of services and meet market demand.

In the energy sector, for example, in the space of just a few years, Spac has become one of the leading constructors of gas compressor and storage stations in France. Placed at regular intervals along the path of the network, compressor stations pressurize the gas traveling along the pipeline. Storage stations are built in the appropriate geological zones. Today, Spac is in a position to provide turnkey engineering contracts known as EPCC (Engineering, Procurement, Construction, Commissioning) contracts, from design all the way through to commissioning. “We’ve hired new types of qualified staff – welding engineers, method engineers, technicians – capable of mastering the engineering aspects of these projects”, explains Philippe Joanlanne, manager of the Major Projects profit center. “The major projects team specializing in gas compressor and storage stations has grown from around twenty employees to close to a hundred today!” The latest EPCC contract was the Hauterives storage station in the Drôme region of southern France, for Storengy (storage subsidiary of GDF Suez), worth a total of €56 million.

In the water sector, Spac has also adapted its offer to evolving market requirements: “With the construction of ocean outfalls, flood protection barriers and water purification and treatment stations, civil engineering and maritime projects have become genuine growth sectors”, points out Bernard Delpretti, head of Operations.

**Promising outlook for the future**

Spac is operating in growth markets in Europe. In the energy sector, major international gas transport projects (Northstream, Southstream, Nabucco, etc.) are set to be launched over the course of the coming decades. In France, new rules with respect to pipeline inspections – once every five years – will lead to an increase in the number of maintenance and repairs programs. In the water and environment sector, water distribution and purification offer some great development opportunities. Spac is more than ready for the challenges that lie ahead.

“In March 2008, we launched Ambition 2012. This corporate project has two main targets: a safety index below 4 and a 4% profit margin. Its success depends on the implementation of four key tools: shared feedback, cross-functional work, local approach to strategy implementation and strong communication”, concludes Gilles de Bagneux.

**ENVIRONMENT:**

**TRENCH-FREE TECHNOLOGIES**

In order to reduce the environmental impact of its activities, Spac uses a number of innovative techniques: small diameter directional drilling for the laying of gas networks and pipelines; large diameter directional drilling to overcome obstacles of all types, in any soil environment; pipe bursting; a micro-tunnel boring machines for the installation of larger underground pipelines. Spac also carries out mechanized excavations using vacuum trucks and reprocesses the excavated earth on-site using solutions adapted to the specific operations (from screens to mobile crushing plants).
NATURAL GAS COMPRESSOR STATION
Placed at regular intervals along the route of natural gas transport networks (every 120 to 150 km), compressor stations such as the one built by Spac shown here in Bazainville, in the Yvelines region south of Paris, increase the pressure of the gas in the pipeline to compensate for pressure drops during transportation.
It is now possible for drivers to reduce their fuel consumption thanks to the onboard installation of the e-manager system. Practical, reliable and simple to use, the device is placed between the main filter and the injection pump and provides a direct, real-time measurement of fuel consumption. Consisting of a flow meter reader and a GPRS box, it collects the information, which is then re-processed via an operating interface.

Some 250 vehicles fitted

Axima Centre (Screg Sud-Est) was chosen as the pilot site and the e-manager system was deployed at the profit center in June 2008, leading to a 10% reduction in fuel consumption in 2009. In parallel, drivers attended an eco-driving training course. Thanks to the e-manager software, drivers are told how much fuel they have consumed at the end of each month and they can adapt their driving on the basis of this information in order to improve their performance. The system actually goes further still in that an integrated alarm is triggered in the event of excessive consumption or abnormal idling. Following the pilot test, all Screg Sud-Est employees are now familiar with the system and some 250 vehicles have been fitted.
Like those held in previous years, the 2010 e-nov competition is designed to take the ingenious ideas and practices of employees and disseminate them throughout the Group.

E-nov competition: share your ideas!

Are you an employee who has ideas for improving productivity or working conditions? If so, submit them to the internal 2010 e-nov competition before December 31, 2010. “The objective is to promote employees’ good ideas and good practices and make sure the people behind them are recognized by management and colleagues”, explains Bruno Morel, division manager at Colas’ Equipment Department. Prizes – ranging in value from 1,000 to 2,000 euros – will be awarded for the widest application in the Group, the most significant safety improvements, the best energy and environmental approach, the greatest productivity improvement and the biggest return on investment. The jury will also award a special prize. To spice up the competition a little, a new award has been created this year: Handy-Plus will reward the most outstanding innovation for the adaptation of workstations to allow disabled workers to do their jobs. “Workstation adaptations are often case-specific. With this competition, good ideas can be used again in other profit centers, subsidiaries and countries because we make sure that good practices are disseminated throughout the Group, irrespective of whether they win or not”, underlines Bruno Morel.
Teams from Colas Suisse fitted high-energy solar panels on a pilot asphalt mix plant.

The Colas Suisse profit center in Geneva could hardly wait for spring to arrive: the first rays of the season meant that the newly fitted high-energy panels on the pilot asphalt mix plant could fire into action. It’s the first time an industry has used ultra-vacuum thermal solar panel technology (developed and produced by Corp. SRB Energy S.L. based on a CERN patent) in this way. These high-performance experimental panels make it possible to maintain the bitumen at a temperature of 180°C. Colas Suisse got involved in the project back in 2004: “The carbon tax brought in by the Swiss government encouraged companies to seek energy-saving solutions,” explains Pierre Bornet, Quality, Safety, Environment Manager at Colas Suisse. “We signed an agreement with the Confederation to cut our CO₂ emissions by more than 20% between 2005 and 2010. The criteria are stringent and are geared, for example, towards encouraging the use of renewable energies in place of electrical energies.” This project enables Colas Suisse not only to meet its commitments as a responsible company but also to create links with customers for whom environmental considerations play a key role in decision making.
ISO 14001, ISO 9001 and OHSAS 18001 certified, the Rutès quarry and asphalt plants in Latour-de-Carol (in the eastern Pyrenees region of France) have undergone the Carbon Footprint® audit. The quarry has been awarded the highest level in the French Unicem’s (National Union of Quarry and Construction Materials Industries) Environmental Charter.

A quarry, an emulsion plant, a cold-mix plant and a works center were selected in 2009 by Colas Midi-Méditerranée’s Languedoc-Roussillon pilot profit center to take part in the Carbon Footprint® audit. The greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions directly or indirectly associated with each of these activities were calculated. The audit was carried out in four stages: definition of working parameters, awareness-raising and training of all employees, information collection and data analysis and retrieval. The audit is a prelude to the definition of action plans and a change in working practices: “We now know that there is considerable room for improvement in a number of areas. By reducing engine idling in trucks by 30%, for example, we can cut our GHG emissions significantly”, underlines Renaud Guillemain, the profit center’s QSE manager. A thermal performance assessment of the profit center’s buildings was also carried out in order to determine heat loss and implement the required corrective measures. In addition, in the near future, the profit center is planning to fit some machines with sensors to provide practically real-time fuel consumption data. The plan is to extend these initiatives to cover other sites and equipment throughout the course of 2010.
The safety “toolbox talk” is one of the fundamental tools of the workplace accident prevention program. In addition to reviewing basic safety rules, it’s an opportunity to outline any specific safety issues concerning a given site.

The safety results achieved by the Group in 2009 were more than satisfactory, exceeding targets set for 2010. Particularly worthy of note was the 15% improvement in the accident frequency rate over the previous year. For French subsidiaries, the indicator fell to 10 lost-time accidents per million hours worked, compared to 11.6 in 2008. Similar improvements were seen internationally*, with a frequency rate of 3.4 in North America (5.9 in 2008), 8.1 in Europe (8.1 in 2008) and 5.9 in the Indian Ocean/Africa/Asia zone (6.8 in 2008). However complacency is not an option. Since its safety-improvement drive was first introduced many years ago, Colas’ ambition has been to achieve a zero accident rate. New tools are constantly being added to the prevention program in the field. Likewise, first aid training for employees has been made a priority. Today, 27% of the Group’s employees have a certificate in workplace first aid (31% in France and 26% internationally). The target for 2014 is 35%, with at least two first-aiders present on each job site.

* The regulatory definition of a lost-time accident is much broader in France than it is in most other countries. This largely explains the discrepancies observed between France and the international companies.
In and around jobsites and production sites, the safety of pedestrians, be they employees or third parties, is paramount at Colas.

Every year, there are serious accidents involving pedestrians and machines on jobsites. In 2007, Colas decided to set up a think-tank to tackle the issue, joining forces with the French National Research and Safety Institute (INRS), the North-East regional Medicaid office (CRAM) and two machine manufacturers. A number of avenues were discussed, including the possible onboard use of innovative tools designed to prevent the risk of collision between pedestrians and machines. As a result of this initiative, Colas and the INRS forged a partnership to test electromagnetic and laser solutions for detecting the presence of individuals in the field, with two pilot subsidiaries, Colas Centre-Ouest and Screg Est, agreeing to test the new equipment.

The experiment was initially carried out on various types of road projects. The INRS tried to assess the effectiveness of the equipment in working conditions as well as any changes in behavior. “In light of the results obtained, Colas and the INRS have decided to extend the experiment to include different working environments (quarries and excavation sites),” clarifies Hugues Decoudun, Safety Manager at Colas.
In signing up to the Partners’ Club charter, Colas is demonstrating its commitment to the integration of disabled people seeking employment.

Disabilities: Colas joins forces with Adecco

In February, Adecco, the temporary recruitment agency, inaugurated the first disability employment and skills center in Paris. The purpose of the facility is to provide additional support to disabled people seeking work. To ensure the success of the initiative, Adecco has joined forces with socially-responsible companies, including Colas, to create the Partners’ Club. All the partners have signed up to a charter setting out their commitments: to improve the way the disability employment and skills center is operated and offer trials; to gain a better understanding of the background and skills of disabled people seeking work; to design the appropriate tools and resources required for these backgrounds; to communicate as a body with public service employment partners and the disabled sector; to create a research and analysis 'observatory'. Initially rolled out in the Greater Paris region, this pilot initiative is likely to be extended to other regions. “The initiative fits perfectly with our employment policy in favor of people with disabilities,” emphasizes Antoine Cristau, Diversity Manager in Colas’ Human Resources Department. “It’s already paying off since, as a result, a mason has just found a job in one of our subsidiaries in the Paris region.”
A bridge was built to enable Jean-Pierre Farbos to get into his loader without the need to use two hands. The machine itself has been adapted.

"In October 2008, Jean-Pierre Farbos, a loader operator, suffered a serious accident at home", describes Pierre Pécout, Profit Center Manager at Gama (Scrg Sud-Ouest). "His right forearm was amputated and he lost a finger from his left hand and the use of two others…" Fourteen months later, he was able to go back to work. "With the support of my family, friends and colleagues, I was really excited to get back on the job", explains Jean-Pierre Farbos. "It boils down to the fact that I have this disability, so every day is its own battle!" To help Jean-Pierre return, Gama adapted his job to accommodate his disability. A specific machine was ordered from the manufacturer, with a single left-handed lever — normally activated with the fingers of the right hand — and a simplified steering mechanism for the left arm. A gangway was built to provide easier access to the machine. It took three months to adapt the vehicle, with the whole process taking nearly a year. Doctors, ergonomists and financiers met on a regular basis to work on the case. All this has paid off, with Jean-Pierre successfully returning to work as planned. He is set to go full time again soon. This refreshing and rewarding human experience is a first for Gama.

Redesigning workstations for the disabled
Alongside promoting a better male-female job split, disability and the integration of workers from deprived backgrounds, older employees are an important component of Colas’ diversity policy.

In December 2009, Colas signed an agreement with its social partners relating to the employment of seniors and age management. Antoine Cristau, Colas’ Diversity Manager explains: “The agreement was reached following the publication of the French Social Security Finance Bill for 2009. Focused on keeping people employed, it mainly targets people over the age of 55, but some measures are also relevant for employees of 45 or over. Despite the uncertain legal context in France associated with pension reform – issues such as the retirement age and stress still have to be resolved – we wanted first and foremost to step up our initiatives in favor of seniors and ensure their application throughout the company. So this is a transition agreement that will evolve in three years’ time when it is renegotiated as required by law.” The legislator requires companies to draw up a specific agreement with respect to their senior policy. Every company has to make commitments in at least three of the six areas for action, supported by specific objectives (with figures) and indicators. The agreement signed by Colas means that the Group will maintain employment for 9% of its employees who are 55 and over in 2012, and commits the Group to meeting targets in 5 further areas. Some fifteen indicators will be used across the subsidiaries to ensure traceability.
The new-generation literacy workshops offered by Screg Ile-de-France–Normandie (IDFN) have been a resounding success.

"Poor literacy is nothing new for our profession; some employees need help to face these issues," explains Sandrine Rinaldi, Human Resources Manager with Screg Ile-de-France–Normandie (IDFN). "In 2008, a new-generation literacy workshop was launched by a profit center in the Yvelines region. The program has been a resounding success. Not only have the employees using the workshop made progress, but the initiative has now been copied elsewhere in the company, and two further workshops were started in 2009, in Gennevilliers and Rosny-sur-Seine." These weekly four-hour workshops are designed to help employees who sign up to improve their writing skills and their understanding of French. Sessions take place partly during working time, as provided for in France’s vocational training law. So far, nine skilled workers and two foremen have taken part in the workshops, a sign that poor literacy is no longer a taboo subject. And this year the workshops have gained further credibility, with students working towards the DILF (the beginner’s French language proficiency certificate). This is a state-recognized qualification in the study of French as a foreign language.

**Literacy: Screg IDFN workshops**
On June 8, Hervé Le Bouc and representatives of four trade unions signed the first Group profit-sharing agreement for all employees in mainland France.

Profit-sharing: an agreement for mainland France

On June 8, following eight months of negotiations, Colas’ management and four French trade unions (the CFDT, CFTC, CGC and Force Ouvrière) signed a profit-sharing agreement to be applied across all subsidiaries in mainland France in the years 2010, 2011 and 2012. This is the first agreement of its type for the Group. Profits will be distributed on the basis of two cumulative performance criteria, assessed on a subsidiary by subsidiary basis: economic performance (net profit basis) and safety rating. The aim of this latest initiative is to increase employee motivation and appreciation within the company. “The agreement is also a way of making sure that each and every one of us takes personal responsibility for safety. In the civil engineering sector this needs to be our number 1 priority”, explains Michel Gentil, Social and Human Development Manager in Colas’ HR department. The agreement will potentially concern some 35,000 employees in France.
Every year, Colas Sud-Ouest backs a number of humanitarian and social sponsorship initiatives, a longstanding tradition of cultivating solidarity that has led to a new project: the Route du Cœur (Road of the Heart). “The principle is a simple one,” explains Julie Renaud-Salis, Communication Manager. “The idea is to get employees involved in deciding which annual humanitarian project we should sponsor. Employees suggest a ‘pledge’ (potential sponsorship project) that they feel strongly about and that they’d like to see supported by Colas Sud-Ouest.” Employees came forward with a broad range of projects being led by various associations: the construction of a village hall in Burkina Faso, a trip to the coast organized for families who have never seen the ocean, support in the quest to find a cure for a rare muscular disorder, and a quality system training course for a member of an association supporting Cambodian children, to name just a few. But it was the proposal to support the Alliance Association – an organization that specializes in end-of-life care – that won the votes of the twelve-member jury in April. The help provided will be used to develop the network and optimize the quality of the service offered. Through this initiative, Colas Sud-Ouest is rewarding a ‘pledge’ that affects a great many of its staff in their personal or professional lives.
Opened in the Fall of 2009, the Colas City 3D virtual showroom presents the activities and products of Colas road subsidiaries in France to existing and potential customers. It contains a wealth of images and documents.

Colas City is a virtual 3D interactive showroom offering people the chance to discover the different activities of Colas road subsidiaries in France, as well as the products and services offered. It has been designed around an imaginary town called Colas City. The application is based on a typological approach, adapted to customer requirements: for every need, there is a specific solution. Laura, the virtual receptionist, greets visitors and guides them through the fourteen urban and suburban zones (downtown, bypass, airport, shopping mall, industrial zone, etc.). In order to access information, users simply click on a zone or consult the drop-down menu. Fun, informative and very easy to navigate, Colas City allows users to watch films and download corporate brochures and product data sheets. This new interactive tool was launched in the Fall of last year at the French Mayors’ Convention in Paris, prior to being sent out to all Colas subsidiaries in France on USB key. Distributed at trade fairs or at meetings with customers, Colas City can also be accessed and downloaded at www.colas.com (Colas products section).
Routes magazine makes its contribution to Colas’ responsible development policy (eco-certified paper, Imprim’vert® printing).

Colas’ ongoing responsible development policy applies to corporate communication, too. Routes magazine, for example, has opted to use an eco-friendly printing process, from this issue onwards. Cocoon is 100% recycled paper approved by the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council). This eco-certification guarantees that the wood used has not contributed to the destruction of old forests and that native populations and forestry workers have been treated fairly. The cover of the magazine is now finished with an acrylic gloss, replacing lamination. In terms of the production, the printer used is Imprim’vert® approved: to be awarded this label, the company must undertake to recycle and dispose of waste in accordance with the relevant regulations, ensure the safe storage of dangerous products and abandon the use of toxic products. This triple commitment is further boosted by ISO 14001-certified environmental management practices. Once the magazine has been produced, the printer establishes a printing carbon audit: the result is shown on the inside back cover of the magazine, where a statement regarding the enveloping of the magazine – which, for several years now, has been carried out in a protected workshop (employing disabled workers) – is also printed.
Trade fairs, awards ceremonies, conferences, sports or environmental partnerships, etc. Here are some of the images illustrating what the Group has been up to in France and internationally.

▲ SPEIG TURNS 40
Colas’ IT subsidiary celebrated its 40th anniversary at the Cambon Pavillion, in Paris, as well as the 20th anniversary of Siedi. The 250 guests attended a conference tackling three themes: the digital age, new interfaces and the Roads of the Future.
PLANTING TREES IN MADAGASCAR
Colas Madagascar planted 1,500 fruit trees near its quarry in Diego Suarez. The fruit harvested will provide a useful supplementary income for the villagers.

COLAS 2010 NORTH AMERICA CONFERENCE
This year’s conference on the theme of “Driving Excellence 2010” was held in San Francisco in February and brought together 850 employees from the 12 North American companies.
Two hundred employees representing some ten countries took part in the 7th ski challenge event, where 28 teams competed in two rounds of the giant slalom. On the podium, from left to right: Andréas Wirth (Colas Central Europe), Patrice Meunier (Colas Suisse No. 1, challenge winner) and Lionel Lavernhe (Sacer Paris Nord-Est No. 1).

Colas showed off its environmental expertise at the 16th World Road Congress, held in Lisbon, Portugal from May 25 to 28, 2010.
▲ DISABLED/NON-DISABLED TOURNAMENT
In February, Screg Sud-Ouest supported the mixed disabled/non-disabled tournament organized by the Aquitaine Disabled Sports Committee.

▼ IRF WASHINGTON ENVIRONMENT PRIZE
Colas Madagascar won the 2009 IRF Washington Global Road Achievement award for the RN 6 highway project, in the environment category.
Colas’ fleet in Asia has acquired a new asphalt tanker, known as AD (Asphalt Distribution) Matsu, a reference to the Chinese Goddess of the Sea.

The Hellespont Trader, a Suezmax size tanker, delivered 135,000 tons of Venezuelan crude to the Kemaman refinery in Malaysia, in which Thai subsidiary Tasco has a majority stake.
ABS STORAGE PLANT IN BANDA ACEH

Wasco’s Indonesian subsidiary, ABS, inaugurated its third storage plant in a ceremony attended by local authorities. The plant, with a capacity of 3,500 tons, supplies the western half of Sumatra.

CANADA (YUKON): SOLIDARITY INITIATIVE

Skookum Asphalt Ltd. (Terus Construction Ltd.) helped The Children’s Charity buy a bus specially adapted to carry special needs kids.
As a partner service provider on the Ambatovy mining project, Colas Madagascar was singled out for an award in recognition of its awareness-raising initiatives aimed at tackling AIDS and STDs throughout 2009.

With increasingly complex rules governing the transportation of explosives, ETPC (Colas Mayotte) has a new specially equipped truck enabling it to manufacture explosives on-site for use in its quarrying activities. A much safer solution!

**AMBATOVO MINING PROJECT AWARD**

As a partner service provider on the Ambatovy mining project, Colas Madagascar was singled out for an award in recognition of its awareness-raising initiatives aimed at tackling AIDS and STDs throughout 2009.

**MOBILE EXPLOSIVES PRODUCTION UNIT**

With increasingly complex rules governing the transportation of explosives, ETPC (Colas Mayotte) has a new specially equipped truck enabling it to manufacture explosives on-site for use in its quarrying activities. A much safer solution!
**▲ 41ST WORLD SKILLS**
Didier Correia and Emilien Chambellan, two young employees from Scrog Ile-de-France–Normandie, won the regional competition, in the road builders category.

**▼ GROUP ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE**
Some 200 environment officers, internal 14 001 auditors and operators came together in Toulouse on June 7 and 8. One of the main items on the agenda was the carbon footprint.
Hubert Reeves: "A determined approach is required to meet the challenge of the sixth extinction"

When astronomy meets ecology... The astrophysicist Hubert Reeves, Chairman of the ROC League for the preservation of wild fauna, invites us to take action against climate change and the erosion of biodiversity.

You've been enchanting us with tales of the stars for many years. Now you're a concerned campaigner battling to protect the planet.

How do you move from astronomy to ecology?

Hubert Reeves: In order to fully understand the major challenges facing the planet and humanity in the next thirty years, we need to go back to our origins and place ourselves in relation to the time scale of the universe. In the movie 'Annie Hall', Woody Allen says that there are four major existential questions: Where do we come from? Who are we? Where are we going? and... What are we going to eat tonight?! Astronomy and ecology provide answers to these questions.

What does astronomy tell us about our origins?

H. R.: The universe is an archipelago of more than...
100 billion galaxies, each made up of around 100 billion stars. The stars represent a fundamental component of our personal history: the very atoms that we are made of come from them. To a certain extent, we are star dust particles. The sun was created 4.5 billion years ago. Putting things into perspective in this way gives us food for thought, at a time when life on Earth is threatened by man's activities.

Are you implying the idea of waste?
H. R.: We've known since earliest Antiquity that the planet and its resources won't last forever. But in the space of a single century we've built an entire civilization around oil as if it were an inexhaustible resource, we're destroying forests on a massive scale and we're plundering the oceans ... We don't seem to care what happens once we're gone! Today, CO₂ emissions related to our activities and the depletion of resources are significantly disrupting the balance of the planet and posing a major threat to the future of humanity. The increase in the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere (around 30% since 1950) is the direct cause of global warming. Beside the fact that melting ice caps and rising water levels will create millions of ecological refugees, the climate has been destabilized. Hurricanes, heat waves and periods of severe cold will become increasingly frequent.

What do you think about climate skepticism?
H. R.: It is quite legitimate to wonder whether climate change isn’t just part of a natural process. We all know that over the course of history the planet has experienced periods of heating up followed by glaciation. When dinosaurs roamed the Earth, the temperature was 10°C higher. 250 million years ago, the quantity of CO₂ in the atmosphere was 15 times higher. Nevertheless, in its most recent report, the IPCC reckons that – with 90% certainty – the majority of global warming can be put down to human activity. The most sensible thing we can do is to trust the findings of this group set up by the United Nations, which brings together the world's top 2,500 scientists.

Is the erosion of biodiversity as dangerous as global warming?
H. R.: Every year, hundreds of animal and plant species are destroyed as a direct result of our activities. Symbolic animals such as polar bears, but others too, such as frogs, swallows, etc. Earthworms oxygenate the soil, butterflies pollinate fruits ... Any loss of a species poses a threat to another, since everything is interdependent, including us humans.

Could life on Earth disappear altogether?
H. R.: One thing is certain: life will continue on Earth. There will always be species that manage to survive the most catastrophic events, such as extremophile bacteria. In the past, severe climatic events, volcanic eruptions and giant meteorite strikes have obliterated numerous species, including the dinosaurs 65 million years ago, yet other have survived. The ones that do survive are those that can adapt, living in a state of harmony that consists in giving and taking. What's happening at the moment is that we seem to be waging war against nature...

...and if we win, does that spell the end for us?
H. R.: The 6th extinction is underway and may involve the human race. A paradox! Man, who has always believed himself to be eternal, would be both cause and victim. On the scale of the universe, this disappearance would be purely anecdotal if we leave to one side the major contributions of humanity: culture, art, science... and compassion.

Do you have grounds for optimism?
H. R.: Man alone is capable of preventing the sixth extinction. Two major forces are up against each other: that of deterioration, which continues at a very quick pace, and that of raised awareness. Ecology circles have long since been aware of these issues; and now decision-makers have begun to take them on board, although they have been slow to act. You only have to look at the conferences in Rio, Bali, Bonn, Copenhagen and soon Mexico. Quantifying the actual cost of global warming has delivered a salutary psychological shock. The other reason for optimism is the progress being made in the field of renewable energies.

Is reducing growth a solution?
H. R.: No. It's a pessimistic concept that would penalize billions of people living below the poverty line. The solution lies in the better management of our growth, doing more with less. Energy savings lie at the heart of the challenge. If we keep going as we are, by 2400 we will need all the sun's energy to meet our needs. So we have to reduce our needs and focus on energy sources compatible with humanity's time scale. What will be the state of the planet in 2050? As Jean Monnet said about Europe, "It's not about being optimistic or pessimistic. It's about being determined".
How can we derive pleasure from working? Can we identify with our work? Maurice Thévenet, a specialist in the field of human resources management, attempts to provide answers to these issues that are as important to employees as they are to the company.

What led you to examine the notion of pleasure at work?

Maurice Thévenet: It’s an issue that I became interested in very early on. Around thirty years ago, I wrote a thesis on absenteeism at a major bank. I couldn’t understand how 95% of people turned up for work every morning even though their collective bargaining agreement provided them with every possible legal reason to just stay home! I continued to research the field, taking a more in-depth look at organizations, management and employee involvement.
In your opinion, does employee involvement automatically translate into effective corporate performance?

M. T.: Involvement has no positive impact on company performance if the organizational structure isn’t conducive or if there is a lack of skills and expertise. Involvement is a means of flattering our system of personal values. Many companies dream of having employees who are involved and some go as far as to make this the primary objective of their human resources policy. Managers wrongly devote time and energy to creating, stimulating and increasing such involvement. It is unrealistic to attempt to create involvement: individuals themselves decide whether or not to put the effort in. But while the company cannot lay down by decree individual involvement, it can establish the conditions that encourage it: employees have to assimilate the way the company functions but the company itself has to be committed to employees and help them embrace their jobs as their own.

So if involvement doesn’t necessarily improve performance, what positive impact does it have?

M. T.: Companies need employees to be involved in their work in order to promote individual development. An involved employee means a flattered ego! An involved employee is proud of his/her job and committed to defending the company image tooth and nail. And when they go home at night, they can’t wait to recount their day. Work can then be likened to an investment, a social activity that some people have termed “work ethics” or “work value”. Involved employees enhance the status of their work by associating with it values such as achievement, competition, social recognition, duty, etc. Work becomes an integral part of life and sometimes even extends beyond the professional setting. When this happens we’re entering the realms of over-involvement.

Even during a period of crisis?

M. T.: Even more so in a period of crisis! In a crisis situation involvement provides the very fuel of the company. The American business man Warren Buffet had an extraordinary phrase: “Financial markets are like the sea, it’s only when the tide goes out that you learn who’s been swimming naked”. Something similar happens when companies find themselves in a crisis situation. When the crisis comes along it’s obvious which companies had a significant involvement potential and those that didn’t. Generally speaking, companies whose employees are involved do better.

Does deriving pleasure from work still exist as a notion?

M. T.: Today work is more akin to “SSS”: stress, suffering, suicide! Work is perceived as a long, hard battle, an endless ordeal. Our organizations are increasingly complex, which doesn’t help. When we’re shown an organization chart, it may be esthetically pleasing to look at but the modus operandi is incomprehensible. It’s hard to be involved in a company whose codes cannot be discerned, in which there is no individual visibility. However, the notion of pleasure exists. A few years ago, I conducted a study whereby I asked a sample of 1,800 employees to tell me about a point in their career when they felt particularly involved in their job. 46% said they had a feeling of being useful, i.e. a concrete impression. And 45% of those surveyed said that the feelings they had were those of pleasure and satisfaction.

What other feelings are associated with an involved employee?

M. T.: In this same study, the other recurring feelings were ones of fear, tension, anxiety, worry about not being able to handle things, about not being up to the job at hand. Pride came next. Employees felt proud: for them the company reflected an image that matched the ideal they wanted to embody.

What is it that ultimately encourages an employee to be actively involved?

M. T.: For some people, involvement stems from the company’s business (its products and services). By entering a given sector, people can live a childhood dream. They can also find a social status through the image reflected by the company. The immediate environment can be another source of involvement: A pleasant workplace, friendly colleagues, understanding customers, a dynamic management team, etc. also play a significant role in employee involvement. The reasons for being happy at work are diverse and it is up to each individual to find their own...
Sponsorship activities are extended

Colas has included two new fields – skills and solidarity – to sit alongside its Foundation, created in 1991, and Colas on Stage, launched in 2008.

For almost twenty years now, artistic creation has been the focus of Colas’ corporate sponsorship activities. Painting has had pride of place thanks to the creation of the Colas Foundation in 1991 by Alain Dupont, Chairman and CEO of the Group from 1987 to 2007. But music too has enjoyed significant support for many years, with the sponsorship of City of Paris international music competitions, the Marciac jazz festival, support for musical productions at the Paris Opera or the Champs-Élysées Theater and, more recently, the partnership forged with the cellist Gautier Capuçon. Last but not least, dance has benefited from Colas’ support, with the
launch of the Colas on Stage initiative in 2008 focusing on dance and music. Today, Colas has extended its sponsorship programs to other forms. “Our approach is now hinged around four distinct activities: the Colas Foundation for painting, Colas on Stage for dance and music, Colas Life for solidarity initiatives and, lastly, skills sponsorship”, explains Sophie Sadeler, Colas’ Corporate Communications Director.

The Colas Foundation dedicated to painting
Imagining the roads of tomorrow and painting them... An inspirational subject matter for the artists of all nationalities selected by the Colas Foundation over the course of the past twenty years or so. The current collection contains more than 250 canvases, displayed in the offices and reception areas of Colas and its subsidiaries in France and internationally. The “roads of the imagination” collection is the concrete result of the Foundation’s support for contemporary painting, bringing art into the company and uniting employees around creative depictions of its core business.

Music and dance with Colas on Stage
Supported by world famous artists such as the French cellist Gautier Capuçon, the choreographer and former soloist with the Béjart Ballet, Alexandra Bansch, and the celebrated Bangladeshi-British choreographer and dancer, Akram Khan, Colas on Stage promotes theatrical arts as a common language and aims to use its support for musical and dance creations as a vehicle for conveying the company’s management messages. “Diversity”, chosen as the theme for 2010, follows “Talent” in 2008 and “Transversality” in 2009. It will be illustrated by a choreographic creation by Akram Khan, “Vertical Road”, sponsored by Colas. The international tour will enable subsidiaries in various countries to take part in the dissemination of the values of diversity.

Colas Life and solidarity initiatives
Colas subsidiaries have been actively involved in developing countries for many years: the construction of a school in Benin and a health center in Gabon, an AIDS awareness campaign in Madagascar, financial support for a toy library in Morocco for visually-impaired children and the provision of drinking water for people in Djibouti, etc. All these initiatives reflect the subsidiaries’ commitment to improving the day-to-day living conditions of local populations. Further solidarity initiatives are also supported in France and other geographic regions where the Group is present. Today, Colas has launched the Colas Life solidarity program. Six projects involving volunteer employees are currently being set up with the Good Planet foundation, created by the photographer Yann Arthus-Bertrand.

A first skills sponsorship
In April, Colas launched a new type of support with the signing of a long-term skills sponsorship agreement with the Museum and National Estate of Versailles (see below) covering the upgrading of the estate’s paths. In addition to contributing to heritage protection and the cachet of a prestigious reference, the sponsorship is a means of promoting Colas’ activities, know-how and expertise, as well as the teams who carry out the projects.

FOCUS ON...

COLAS’ SKILLS SPONSORSHIP AT VERSAILLES!
The flagship of French heritage, the grounds of the Versailles Castle attract millions of visitors every year and the 43 km of pathways have deteriorated significantly as a result. With a view to repairing and upgrading the most badly affected areas, on April 15, 2010 the Museum and National Estate of Versailles signed a long-term sponsorship agreement with Colas. It’s the first time Colas has committed to a skills sponsorship initiative. The repair work began in May with the esplanade around the Fountain of Apollo. Teams will then move on to the Etoile royale (Royal star) and the Castle’s north terrace. With environmental and heritage protection foremost in its mind, Colas has developed a specific product for this project known as Helicol, in honor of Louis XIV, the Sun King. The product is made up of local aggregates taken from the Seine valley combined with a translucent binder. This beige-colored pavement with light beige aggregates is faithful to the historic textures and colors of the grounds’ paths and makes them longer wearing....it also significantly reduces the amount of dust kicked up by visitors!
Olivier Masmonteil: “Roads, the promise of an encounter”

Most of your paintings depict natural landscapes. What was it that drew you to roads?

Olivier Masmonteil: In 2008-2009, I went on a world tour to see the landscapes that have always fired my imagination: the glaciers of South America, the deserts of Australia… from that trip, I put together a series of one thousand pictures in 25 x 35 cm format, called “At any time of the day”. So I spent a long time on the road! Roads are a means of escapism: they take you to the places you want to be. When I painted the road for Colas, I thought about American cinema and the esthetics of road movies.

What is it you like more about the countryside than cities?

O. M.: I’m from a rural background and grew up in the Massif Central. I’m a solitary person and love untouched landscapes. In my paintings, human presence is often suggested rather than portrayed. The road may be empty but it still holds the promise of an encounter.

What are you working on at the moment?

O. M.: I’m still exploring the landscape theme and revisiting my world tour using large-format canvases, where I’ve got more freedom to portray my emotions: it’s less figurative and more expressive! I can recall, for example, a day I spent tuna fishing in the Marquesas Islands with a fisherman: I’m trying to depict the immenseness of the Pacific Ocean, the mystery of the night, the power of nature, etc.

Born in 1973 in Romilly-sur-Seine, Olivier Masmonteil graduated from the Bordeaux School of Fine Arts. He lived in Leipzig, Germany, and spent two years traveling the world before settling in Paris. Most of his exhibitions are held in France but he also takes part in joint exhibitions in Europe. His favorite theme is landscapes.
Olivier Masmonteil
"Routes du monde"
2009