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Cover photo: the Royal Guard in front of Buckingham Palace, in London.
As anticipated, years of steady growth for Colas came to a grinding halt in the choppy waters of 2009. But despite this we managed to stay on course.

The year saw markets declining significantly and revenue of around €11.7 billion represents a fall of nearly 9% compared to the record year we had in 2008. Stimulus plans didn’t live up to expectations, substitution and offset effects occurred, private investments fell back sharply, major projects came to an end with nothing to follow on behind, winter weather conditions were poor, and competition was fiercer than ever. And let’s not forget the negative effect of tumbling bitumen prices on revenue. In all our geographic zones, subsidiaries focused on profitability rather than volume: a prudent strategy that has paid off given the intensity of the crisis affecting our businesses.

So a turbulent year, yet one that was full of contrasts depending on the country and business in question. North America, Asia and Africa held up well. Things were more difficult in France and northern Europe, as well as the Indian Ocean and the West Indies. As for central Europe, the crisis showed little mercy.

Similarly, the global recession affected businesses to varying degrees: waterproofing acquitted itself well, as did railways, while roads, safety and signaling as well as pipes and mains posted slight falls.

So what does 2010 have in store for us?

Despite the fact that work on hand at the end of 2009 was slightly higher than it was at the end of 2008, 2010 may well be even more difficult than 2009. How can we be confident that the crisis is behind us and that renewed growth will follow in the wake of stimulus plans by the middle of the year, carrying us through to the major projects of 2011? It’s true that we’ve had some great successes in the field with PPPs, but many uncertainties remain. It’s up to each and every one of us to remain vigilant and proactive in a number of areas: improvements to our organization, productivity, marketing, employee recruitment and management, optimization of our business ‘mix’, reinforcement of energy savings initiatives, promotion of recycling and warm mix techniques, etc.

We must draw on the strengths that form the Group’s lifeblood in everything we do: our wealth and diversity of talent, our capacity for innovation, our powerful industrial tool, our network solidarity, synergies between businesses and our responsible development strategy. This drive for ethical, economic, social and environmental excellence will ultimately enable us to steer a steady course through the difficulties we face.

And when markets do begin to grow again, Colas will be ready to provide the major transport infrastructures that are required throughout the world.

“The road is hard but it is beautiful” (Charles de Gaulle)
Teams from Colas Rhône-Alpes’ Grenoble profit center were the first in the region to use the Group’s latest generation of noise-reducing surfacing: Nanosoft®. Chosen by AREA (the Rhône-Alpes highway management company), this pioneering asphalt mix was applied over the final two-kilometer stretch of highway A41 South on the approach to Grenoble. The idea was to provide a radical solution to the noise pollution suffered by residents caused by heavy traffic. The work – all performed at night – involved a 25,000-m² section of roadway, which is the biggest Nanosoft® project to date in France. Noise measurements and impact studies will be carried out to assess the acoustic efficiency of Nanosoft® over the course of time. The results will be used to make comparisons with other products commonly used on freeways.

FRANCE

A 41 South: a very hushed premiere

From French Guiana to Canada via France and Thailand... a rapid trip around the world in words and pictures to see the Group’s jobsites, work in progress and finished projects.
The Pôle Solère in Lyon: Smac in the sun

Located at the heart of the Porte des Alpes Technology Park in Lyon, France, the Pôle Solère is a unique center of excellence in France in the field of new environmental building technologies. Smac teams based in Vénissieux carried out the waterproofing and roof work on this certified positive energy building. Of particular interest are the photovoltaic panels on the terraces.
In June, teams from Sacer Paris-Nord-Est and Screg Nord-Picardie resurfaced the runway at Beauvais-Tillé Airport – all 2,450 m of it – in a record time of just six days and seven nights. The work was part of a wider project to bring the airport up to required standards and to install ILS 3 (Instrument Landing System 3), used to help aircraft land even in poor visibility. Fog is a common problem in the region, often forcing airlines to re-route planes to other airports, or even cancel flights altogether. Since ILS3 requires a perfectly level surface, teams completely redesigned the wearing course and filled in a slight dip located in the middle of the runway. Four hundred people worked in shifts, day and night, to complete the project on schedule. The operations themselves consisted of 100,000 m³ of earthworks and 110,000 m² of planing work, and the application of 20,000 tons of aggregates and 40,000 tons of asphalt mix (applied at a rate of 750 tons per hour). An exceptional project for an airport that is aiming to double its capacity over the next few years.
Colas Ile-de-France-Normandie’s Devaux Saint-Lô and Lasnon profit centers now use Vegeflux R® surface dressings to maintain secondary roads in the La Manche area of France. Particularly well suited to roads that bear only small to moderate volumes of traffic, the plant-based fluxing agent, Vegeflux R®, is a more environmentally-friendly product as it reduces the emission of volatile organic compounds (VOC) and odors during application. Vegeflux R® surface dressings also help roadways last longer, providing a watertight surface and uniform roughness for better skid-resistance. In 2009, 500,000 m² of road surface were renovated using the product in the region.

Normandy: roads go green

Opened in September, the new stadium in Saint-Renan (Brittany) is the only one in France with a synthetic athletics track that meets the French Athletics Federation’s new 2009 standards. The work—which had to meet the very highest quality specifications—was performed by teams from Scree Ouest in Brest.
The container pier extension at the Port of Longoni in Mayotte is exceptional on many fronts. Launched in early May 2006, the work took place in several stages for final delivery in March 2009. Teams from Colas Mayotte began by constructing the breakwaters. They then had to dredge the dock in order to increase the draught and fill the apron of the future terminal. The third phase of building operations involved technical wizardry of the highest order: 197 steel piles had to be driven into the ground to a depth of 40 meters to form the foundations for the superstructure. The civil engineering phase came to an end in January 2009 with the pouring of concrete across the surface of the pier to create the subfloor and the building of the fenders and equipment that would serve as the contact interface for vessels. The terminal’s new look got its final touches when 22,000 tons of asphalt mix were applied to the site’s 11 acres of platforms and roadways. Teams had to deal with a number of major problems throughout the course of the project: when tropical storm Fane swept through the area, for example, it took with it a section of the breakwater that was under construction at the time. There can be no doubt that this project will stand out in the history of Colas Mayotte.
In September, after sixteen months of work, the Auchan Blois-Vineuil shopping mall opened its doors for business. One of the specific features of this new mall is that it was built in line with French Green Building standards called HQE (High Environmental Quality). To meet their client’s high standards in this field, teams from Colas Centre-Ouest’s Blois profit center employed energy-saving solutions to construct the 1,450-space parking lot. They used Ecologic.ieL®, the software tool developed by Colas to simulate energy consumption and CO₂ emissions upstream. After stripping and clearing the existing roadways and fill, these materials were then crushed in situ and recycled to create the new parking area. The results of the project speak for themselves: considerable savings in terms of materials used and energy consumed for a new-generation shopping mall. Auchan has even set aside parking spaces specifically for hybrid vehicles.
Innovating for the environment

As part of an initiative led by the Eure-et-Loir regional council, Colas Centre-Ouest teams took part in an experimental project on Route RD28 involving 3E+R® warm-mix asphalt containing 50% reclaimed asphalt pavement (RAP). The results were impressive, with energy savings and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, thanks to the combination of recycling techniques and lower manufacturing temperatures... All in all, a project of the very highest technical quality.
Colas Rail’s signaling center is installing the automatic block signaling system (ABS) for SNCF (French National Railways) at Etoile d’Annemasse, in the Haute-Savoie region of the French Alps. The teams have installed a computerized signaling control room in each of the four stations served along the Longeray-Annemasse route. Each one is linked to the centralized control center in Annemasse.

The project, which also involves adapting 25 level crossings to the system, is scheduled for completion at the end of February 2010. To meet the deadlines, three teams of eight people are working on the three sections of the line. Rail traffic has had to be suspended for three entire weeks on two separate occasions to allow work on the tracks to take place. The rest of the time, teams are working alongside the tracks: SNCF maintains safety by warning of the arrival of trains using trumpet blasts! Signaling is a business in its own right at Colas Rail: teams are not only capable of working as part of a global project, they are also in a position to negotiate contracts for their specific activity. Today, they are involved in projects for tram and subway systems, as well as private branch lines and junctions.
A major project is currently underway in the Amazon rainforest, close to the border between French Guiana and Brazil. Initiated by the French Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and the Sea, this joint venture project involving the Guyanese subsidiary Ribal TP concerns the construction of a six-kilometer stretch of road between the town of Saint-Georges and the bridge that will eventually cross the river Oyapock at the border, providing a direct road link between French Guiana and Brazil. Work began in May 2009 with the clearance of 20 hectares of forest. The earthworks represent 800,000 m³ of materials, with some 15,600 m³ moved every day, requiring the use of 60 machines. Drainage work includes the building of three reinforced concrete hydraulic structures, 16 settling basins and 21 kilometers of ditches. To ensure the continuity of the forest and the free movement of wildlife, two eco-corridors have been created. The road construction phase is slated for completion at the start of 2010. Around 200 people will have been involved.
An unusual choreography was played out on Highway A13 between the end of 2008 and October 2009. Teams from Genier-Deforge, a subsidiary of Colas Ile-de-France Normandie, dismantled several major engineering structures, including an entire highway interchange, within the Beuzeville toll sector, in Normandy. For each part of the project, the work was carried out exclusively at night, between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. With the removal of safety barriers, the laying of protective matting to cushion falling concrete blocks, the shearing of the blocks, the removal of materials, the folding and removal of matting and re-erection of safety barriers, etc., a team of fifteen worked against the clock to get everything done in time. The equipment they used was impressive to say the least: a demolition shear weighing 9 tons and two others weighing 2.8 tons and an excavator-mounted rock breaker. Three wheel loaders, each with a capacity of 5 m³, were used to remove the rubble, which was then taken away by truck.

FRANCE

The night shift

Bordeaux: strolling along the river banks

Novello’s teams (Colas Sud-Ouest) have renovated the riverbank walkways along the Garonne river in Bordeaux, between two of its main bridges, the pont de Pierre and the pont Saint-Jean. Earthworks, drainage, steel and granite curbs, paving, wooden planking, street furniture (benches, steps, fountains, etc.); after thirty months, the metamorphosis of the left bank of the river is now complete.
Designed by the firm of architects Lampotang and Siew, the new French cultural center on Mauritius Island is beginning to take shape. The contract for the work, which began at the end of 2008 and is due for completion in 2010, was awarded to the subsidiary Colas Maurice Limitée. The teams started by demolishing the existing buildings before moving ahead with the actual construction work in March 2009. The future cultural center will house an amphitheater with 200 seats, a cafeteria, a library, an examination room and numerous offices. It has a complex structure: varied geometric shapes, a multitude of floors on different slopes and levels, high circular posts to support the roof. The new site will be home to the Charles-Baudelaire cultural center as well as the center for studies in France. Its mission will be to promote French language and culture, exploiting the opportunities offered by new information and communication technologies.
Nestling between two major railway stations, flanked by the parc Matisse and the district of Romarin, the Jardin des Géants or Garden of Giants is a haven of green right in the heart of the city of Lille, France. It is one of the key features of a vast redevelopment project undertaken by the Greater Lille Urban Area Authority. Opened in June in the presence of Pierre Mauroy and Martine Aubry, this outstanding fantasy garden, containing some 85,000 plant varieties, took two years to create. Teams from Sreg Nord-Picardie played a significant role: SNB (Société Nouvelle Brosset) was responsible for all planting work and surfacing, while the Ramon profit center handled the earthworks and built the exterior pathways. Designed as a place of relaxation and culture with its open spaces and a large esplanade for staging shows, the Garden of Giants is a sanctuary of peace and meditation. Today, visitors can enjoy a stroll along the promenade des Lentilles (walk of Lenses), the allée des Brumes (path of Mists) and the allée des Têtes-Cracheuses (path of Spitting Heads)…
As the transit point for the numerous pipelines that serve the Total oil refinery in Le Havre, the François 1st lock used to be a major bottleneck. To get traffic moving more freely, the Port Authority asked Total to deviate one of its pipelines. HDI, a Spac subsidiary, came up with an innovative solution: laying a pipeline 34 inches in diameter under the Le Havre Grand Canal and harbor basin by means of horizontal directional drilling over a distance of 1,500 meters. HDI’s teams had to overcome a number of technical challenges, the first of which related to site congestion and maintaining container traffic. The solution they came up with was to design a “catenary” system to bring the pipeline in line with the drilling, taking it above the roads and rail tracks. The other obstacle encountered during the drilling phase was a layer of large flint pebbles incompatible with the horizontal directional technique. HDI got round this problem by installing a steel sheath on either side of the crossing, from the surface down to the marl 35 meters below. HDI was thus able to draw on its expertise and ingenuity to come up with a “turnkey” solution for Total.

FRANCE

Port of Le Havre: from pipe dream to reality

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Thonon-les-Bains: a brand new look

Teams from the Perrier TP Haute-Savoie profit center (Colas Rhône-Alpes) have applied stabilizing sand and laid curbs and granite paving to give the place du 16-août-1944, in Thonon-les-Bains, a complete makeover. Work had to be temporarily suspended over the summer when the square was taken over by tourists and restaurant-goers.
In the spring of 2010, an extraordinary project implemented by the Maine-et-Loire Council will be unveiled with the opening of Europe’s first horticultural amusement park, in Angers. This unique development is intended to be both fun and educational. It covers an area of some 110,000 m² and includes gardens, aquatic spaces, greenhouses and nature trails, as well as various other attractions and entertainment for the whole family. Work on the project started in August 2008 and involved around a hundred companies and almost 350 people. It was a logistically challenging project. Screg Ouest and Sacer Atlantique teams were responsible for the earthworks, sewer system, mains, the construction of ornamental pools, drainage and pathways, etc. all of which had to be completed before any work on the gardens, aquatic spaces and main buildings – including a business center and large greenhouse – could be begun. The entire project has been designed to meet Terra Botanica’s environmental standards. Hence the use of Greenflex® asphalt mix to create an area of grass paving within the 1000-space parking lot.
The City of Rennes asked teams from Sacer Atlantique to join forces with others in an ambitious urban project to redevelop the esplanade Charles-de-Gaulle. This vast town square is now the regional capital’s cultural focal point. Incorporating an array of materials and colors, the esplanade has been arranged into five circles: light grey concrete, grey-blue Lanhélin granite, green concrete, pale grey Louvigné granite and pink La Clarté granite. In all, the project required some 12,000 m² of Colorasphalt® – a color asphalt concrete mix – in a highly original shade: the remarkable grey tint was chosen to blend seamlessly into this granite and concrete environment. Launched in 2006, the project was completed at the end of 2009, when the esplanade was handed back to the people of Rennes.

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**Rennes:**

A ‘solar farm’ in Sainte-Rose

The construction of the La Roseraye photovoltaic farm was launched in January 2009 by EDF Energies Nouvelles. The Reunion Island subsidiary, GTOI, was responsible for the substructure earthworks, the construction of roads and various utilities and the grassing of 70 000 m² of parkland. This flagship renewable energy project was delivered at the end of 2009.
As part of its road network investment program, the Ariège regional council decided to carry out repair work on Route RD 119 near the town of La Tour-du-Crieu. The poor condition of the road had become a potential hazard to users. Colas Sud-Ouest’s Varilhes profit center was selected to perform the work and the teams used the Novacol® recycling technique: following the on-site milling of existing materials, a binder was incorporated and mixed to obtain a new base course. Colas developed this cold in place recycling technique a number of years ago and its subsidiaries have been using it ever since. It is perfectly in line with the requirements of responsible development, generating savings in terms of materials, transport and energy as well as cutting greenhouse gas emissions. The wearing course was applied a month after the initial treatment phase was completed, to allow the base course to cure.
Crystal Palace railway station refurbishment

Built in 1851 to provide a direct rail link to the Great Exhibition of London, Crystal Palace railway station, in the south of the city, was in need of refurbishment as the years had begun to take their toll. Teams from Colas Rail Ltd are carrying out all the work, from track alterations to new points, signaling, site re-electrification, platform extensions, etc.
**FRANCE**

**Green roofs: Smac sows success**

“Green roofs” are gaining ground around the town of Le Mans, France… Between June and December 2008, Smac’s teams fitted more than 1,300 m² of Ecoflor® green roofing on the Le Mans University Teacher Training Institute (IUFM) building. Pre-cultivated carpets of a range of sedum varieties were used on the roofs. And elsewhere, just a few kilometers from Le Mans, in Duneau, exactly the same roofing solution was used on the village hall. The work took place between February and June 2009 and covered an area of 300 m².

In addition to its esthetic qualities, the Ecoflor® process offers a number of advantages: it improves air quality by sinking CO₂, controls rainwater runoff into sewer systems, prolongs the service life of roofs and improves a building’s sound insulation and thermal inertia. Thanks to this innovative process, roofs are being transformed into living spaces that are also good for the environment.
Awarded to the Moroccan subsidiary, GTR, the earthworks (6 million m$^3$ of excavated material) and construction of the drainage systems for Renault’s future Tangiers-Meloussa plant took more than a year to complete. The teams also handled all the preparatory work required for the customs office and the setting-up of site facilities for the other companies involved in the plant’s construction. They even built the site’s access roads. This was a gigantic project – the site covers an area of 160 hectares – mobilizing more than 200 employees as well as significant equipment resources (40 heavy construction machines). The clayey nature of the soil hampered operations, as did exceptional rainfall but teams were soon able to make up for lost time, boosting the pace to 45,000 m$^3$ of cut and fill per day! The first vehicles will leave the plant at the start of 2012.

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**FRENCH GUIANA**

A smooth take-off for Vegecol®

The French Guianan space center in Kourou chose Vegecol®-based mixes for its parking lot areas and weather center. The national space research center (CNES) was looking for an innovative, environmentally-friendly product in line with the requirements of ISO 14001 certification. The use of Vegecol® is a first in French Guiana.

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**MOROCCO**

GTR and Renault, a project in top gear!

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In Reims, teams from Colas Est, Sceg Est and Colas Rail are back on track with their tramway platform project. They won the design-build contract as a consortium back in July 2006 but couldn’t begin until archeological digs had been completed and the work order issued. The project, which was finally launched in May 2008, consists in constructing the 11.2-kilometer stretch of tramline together with its 23 stations. It also covers redevelopment of the immediately surrounding areas. The teams are working on a variety of aspects: the repositioning of drainage pipes, earthworks, upgrading of adjacent roads, construction of the tramway platform foundations, surfacing of platforms, roadways, sidewalks and bike paths, etc.

By the time it is completed, the platform project will have involved 300,000 m$^3$ of earthworks, 20,000 m$^3$ of concrete and 30,000 m$^2$ of grass turf. This is a major technical undertaking requiring the mobilization of 500 employees per day, on average, over a period of twenty-four months. The tramway is due to be up and running by April 2011.

**FRANCE**

The Reims Tramway, a team effort

**ROUTES** No. 24 – January 2010
A project in the heart of Bangkok

Teams from the Thai subsidiary TSS (Thai Slurry Seal Company Ltd) carried out the upgrading work on the North Sathorn Road – a major four-lane route – in downtown Bangkok. The work – which began in April and was done at night and under traffic – was successfully completed on time, a fantastic feat considering the scale of the project right in the heart of the country’s capital!
The highway 85 construction project is the biggest currently underway in eastern Quebec. The overall aim of the project is to transform some sections of the Trans-Canada route into four-lane highways. The route covers a distance of 7,800 kilometers and links Canada’s ten provinces, from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic seaboard. It is made up of complex network of roads and highways with a far from uniform variety of widths and grades along its length. The work, which began in June, consists in upgrading route 185 to a four-lane highway, near the municipality of Saint-Louis-du-Ha ! Ha ! and the town of Cabano, in Temiscouata County. On the agenda: earthworks (8,700,000 m³ of excavated material), demolition, drainage, roadway structures, major engineering structures, pipe laying, signing and lighting. Teams from Sintra – the Quebec subsidiary – have been working on this 20-km stretch since June 2009, with delivery scheduled for September 2011.
Colas Est’s SJE (Société jurassienne d’entreprise) was involved in the construction of the bypass between the Ecole des neiges roundabout and the Jourats intersection, in Saint-Laurent-en-Grandvaux (Jura) in eastern France. The work took place between May and June 2009 and was carried out with the environment very much in mind. As well as making sure waste was correctly managed and the site kept clean, SJE teams endeavored to preserve the living environment of local residents by creating sound insulating walls and safe crossing points. The natural heritage was also a major consideration. To ensure the bypass blended harmoniously into the surrounding landscape, a special technique was used consisting in creating a natural-looking embankment to frame the road; high artificial walls, dug into the rock, allow the vegetation to rapidly colonize each level and speed up the landscaping process. All in all, an exemplary project in terms of environmental protection.

FRANCE

The Angers Tramway, synergy rules!

Colas Rail, Sacer Atlantique, Screg Ouest, Colas Centre-Ouest... the construction of the Angers Tramway is a perfect example of synergy at work. After eight years of studies, consultation and preparatory work, actual construction began on April 1, 2009. Colas Rail is responsible for the entire line (12 km of tracks) while the three regional road subsidiaries are developing a 3.2-km stretch of the route including seven stations and a parking lot.
M6-M60: The road to success

In November 2007, Colas, as part of a consortium, won the contract to build a 78-km section of the M6-M60 highway, including one hundred engineering structures. Started in March 2008, the work is scheduled for completion by March 31, 2010: a particularly tight deadline for the Group’s biggest project ever.
Located in southern Hungary, in a renowned wine-growing region of undulating hills and plains, the construction site of this 78-km section of the M6-M60 highway looks a bit like an ant hill. Numerous highly motivated teams are working busily and methodically at various points along the route. There will be no let-up in the pace until the project has been completed.

The future 2 x 2 lane highway will consist of a 48-km section running north to south (the M6), linking Szekszárd to Mohács, and another 30-km section running east-west (M60), between Mohács and Pécs, Hungary’s fifth biggest city. Once the project has been completed, this attractive university town – European Capital of Culture in 2010 – will have a direct high-speed link to the country’s capital, Budapest. Ultimately (though not before 2013), the highway will provide a link to Croatia and Serbia and Pécs will be opened up to the world.

This project is part of a 30-year public-private partnership (PPP) contract worth €1,060 million signed with the Hungarian government on November 21, 2007 by MAK, a statutory company 30% owned by Colas. The construction consortium (MCG) is made up of three Hungarian subsidiaries of Colas (Alterra, Colas Északkö, Colas Epitő) and subsidiaries of the Austrian company, Strabag. Worth a total of €855 million, Colas' share of the work amounts to €330 million. “This is the biggest project ever handled by the Group,” explains Francis Grass, head of the MCG profit center. “On the agenda are the highway lanes themselves, of course, and the link roads, but also a very large number of standard engineering structures, viaducts, etc. And all this needs to be completed in a record time of barely 28 months, given that we didn’t get going until March 2008 due to bad weather.” It is nonetheless essential that this deadline be met. If it isn’t, penalties amounting to €160,000 per day will have to be paid to the Hungarian government!

Up to 3,300 people

Excavation, drainage systems, road construction, standard engineering structures, viaducts (including the 866 meter-long Szébenyi viaducts), construction of two highway maintenance centers (buildings, salt storage facilities), etc.: to meet the challenge imposed by the tight deadlines and the sheer volume and diversity of the work involved, the strong commitment and motivation of the teams is essential. “On average, around 2,000 people are working on-site at any given time, but the number is sometimes...”

“This is the biggest project ever handled by the Group. On the agenda are the motorway itself, of course, and the link roads, but also a very large number of standard engineering structures, viaducts, etc. And all this needs to be completed in record time: barely 28 months.”
78 KM OF BRAND NEW HIGHWAY

The future 2 x 2 lane highway currently being constructed in southern Hungary will consist of a 48-km section running north to south (the M6), linking Szekszárd to Mohács, and another 30-km section running east-west (M60), between Mohács and Pécs, European Capital of Culture 2010.
as high as 3,300," continues Francis Grass. “Thanks to the commitment of Colas Hungaria’s Major Projects Team, created especially for this contract, we’ve been able to quickly mobilize all the necessary resources from our subsidiaries and subcontractors.” This is a race against the clock punctuated by difficult challenges and unforeseen circumstances, demanding expertise and motivation, combined with some weekend work and frequent night shifts.

Roman excavations

One of the specific features of this ambitious project was that work had to be started simultaneously at various points, in spite of the fact that the majority of the preliminary studies had not yet been completed. Another difficulty was related to the fact that a public-private partnership agreement in Hungary requires the project design (production plans) to be defined during the bidding process. Not a single comma can be changed once the bid has been accepted. Whenever any major problems have emerged, the consortium has had to quickly come up with solutions to comply with the pre-defined plans. Francis Grass explains: “The design of the biggest viaducts had to be revised following the discovery of Roman ruins, so that the construction work and archaeological dig could proceed at the same time. Further Roman archaeological remains were also discovered right in the middle of a maintenance center construction zone, forcing work to come to a halt for six months!” Another surprise was the discovery of a Second World War bomb, fortunately disarmed in half a day.

Cutting-edge techniques

Faced with all the difficulties inherent to a project of this type, the judicious choice of the techniques used proved to be essential. For example, the asphalt mix designs were selected with a very high bitumen content, and have yielded excellent results. The same is true for the civil engineering
techniques used to build the major engineering structures. “We are employing high-performance techniques, especially to construct the main four viaducts. The Széchenyi viaducts (see photo above) each consist of a metal structure spanning 866 meters, with ten supports, each separated by a distance of around 100 meters. As for the Sióviaducts, they have been designed with a mixed steel and concrete structure and the bridge decks have been built using a mobile slip form machine. These are the first structures of their type in Hungary,” specifies Francis Grass.

The project is now entering its last months and weeks. The teams are working flat out to finish.

KEY FIGURES

> SUMS INVOLVED
€1,060 million for the PPP contract
€855 million for the construction consortium, including €330 million for the Colas companies

> TIMETABLE
30 years for the operating license
28 months of construction work

> LENGTH
78 km of 4-lane motorway

> ENGINEERING STRUCTURES
79 standard engineering structures
9 x 2 viaducts
4 two-tube tunnels

> HUMAN RESOURCES
2,000 people on average

> QUANTITIES
8 million m³ of cut
10 million m³ of fill
500,000 m² of cement bound aggregates
900,000 metric tons of asphalt mixes

> EQUIPMENT
800 trucks & 400 heavy construction machines
NUMEROUS MAJOR ENGINEERING STRUCTURES
The M6-M60 contract includes the construction of around a hundred major engineering structures.
> on time, despite the fact that the bad weather has arrived. Missing the completion deadline is not an option. There is no doubt that this out-of-the-ordinary project will be remembered for a long time to come. It will have been a unique experience from several points of view: the way the teams were organized, the involvement of Colas Civil Engineering Technical Department based at the head office in Boulogne, France, in the design of the engineering structures, investment in very high-performance equipment, etc. All this has helped the company win new highway construction contracts in Hungary (M0 and M31).

MAK
THE M6-M60 CONSORTIUM: COLAS HOLDS A 30% STAKE
The statutory company, dubbed MAK*, is made up of four partners. Colas has a 30% share, as do Austria’s leading public buildings and works company Strabag and the British infrastructure investment group John Laing. The remaining 10% share belongs to the South African highway operator Intertoll-Europe. As the holder of a 30-year contract, MAK will begin operating the network via Intertoll-Europe, when the highway section is delivered on March 31, 2010. For the duration of the 28-month construction phase, MAK’s single point of liaison will have been MCG, a joint venture between three Hungarian Colas subsidiaries (Alterra, Colas Északkő, Colas Epitő) and subsidiaries of Strabag.

*Mecsek Autópálya Koncessziós Ltd.

IMRE PUSKAS
A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY
Head of Colas Hungary’s Major Projects Department, Imre Puskás joined the Group in 1999. With overall responsibility for the M6-M60 project, he underlines the importance of organization and preparation. It’s a long drawn-out process… “In order to get things started properly, we had to form a new team of highway, standard engineering structure and viaduct specialists. There were just three of us to begin with, but now we have more than 300 in the team!” he recounts. Not forgetting the administrative red tape that has to be cut through when seeking all kinds of authorizations, which sometimes take an eternity to come through. One thing is sure: the complexity of a project like this, with its record-breaking deadlines, provides everyone taking part in it with an ideal springboard for furthering their careers. And for Colas Hungaria, it’s another exemplary project under its belt. A number of visitors from France, the UK, Croatia, Austria, etc. have travelled to the site regularly to see how the project is progressing.

PAUL-GILLES PARODI
TEAMS THAT SET A SHINING EXAMPLE
Paul-Gilles Parodi joined Colas in 1999 as a site supervisor and has spent most of his career outside France (Austria, Romania, Reunion Island and Mayotte). For the past year, he has been overseeing work on the south section of the M60 highway project in Hungary. "The construction site is so big that to start with it took 10 hours to do a complete tour! It’s also an incredibly diverse project. Just about everything that can be done in terms of construction is being done," he says. Enthusiastic and highly motivated – “This type of project is a once-in-a-career opportunity” – Paul-Gilles underlines the commitment and passion of the teams, who are always ready to work late into the night and at weekends. He’s also come to terms with the “culture shock”: the common language is English but an interpreter is sometimes required to communicate effectively, even having learned a little basic Hungarian…

ROUTES No. 24 – January 2010
Since 2003, Colas Ltd has been playing an increasingly important role in the management and maintenance of the British road and motorway network via long-term contracts known as MACs (Managing Agent Contractor). Today, the subsidiary leads this market.

To understand how this works we have to go back to the start of the 1990s: following the privatization of the road network, the British government created the Highways Agency (HA). Its role is to manage and maintain the English motorway and road networks to the highest possible standards.

"To start with, the Highways Agency used two different service providers: a managing agent and a term maintenance contractor," explains Adrian Sheppard, Head of Colas Ltd’s Highways Services Department. "To make the process more efficient and improve quality, in the early 2000s the HA created the MAC. This innovative form of contract ties the agency to a single entity, which delivers integrated network management and maintenance operations."

A very specific type of contract
MAC contracts offer the advantage of being valid for a period of five years and renewable for...
Colas LTD won its first MAC contract for area 14 in 2003, followed by three more (areas 10, 7 and 12) in 2007, 2008 and 2009.
Although teams are available round the clock, all week long, year-round, most work is carried out at night, to limit disruption to motorists.
COLAS LTD AND MAC CONTRACTS IN FIGURES

> 2 KEY DATES
2003 creation of the A-One joint venture (partners: Colas Ltd, Halcrow)

2006 creation of the new A-One+ joint venture (partners: Colas Ltd, Halcrow, Costain)

> 4 MAC (MANAGING AGENT CONTRACTOR) CONTRACTS
2007-2012 area 10 (North-West England)
2008-2013 area 7 (East Midlands)
2009-2014 area 12 (Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire)

> LENGTH OF COLAS LTD’S MAC NETWORK
3,500 km of roads and motorways, (including major engineering structures), i.e. 32% of the UK’s network

> HUMAN RESOURCES
More than 2,000 employees

> TOTAL CONTRACT VALUE
420 million euros revenue specifically for Colas Ltd

> a further two. The business generated by winning a contract of this type therefore lasts several years, making it very different from a traditional construction project, which generally runs for a much shorter period. Another important difference is that a number of payment mechanisms are provided for in MACs, making it possible to spread the risks proportionally between each partner. These contracts also stand out in that the majority of work takes place at night, since it would be impossible to stop such dense traffic during daylight hours. And lastly, the single entity and the Highways Agency work together as one team. To consolidate the partnership, the contractor even has offices on the client’s premises!

Setting the standard
As Adrian Sheppard explains, “Colas Ltd wanted to position itself in this new market right from the outset. In 2003, we set up the A-One joint venture with the consultancy firm Halcrow. As a result, we managed to secure our first MAC contract for area 14 in North-East England. The contract was extended and is due to come to an end in the summer of 2010.” In 2006, on the back of this success and in order to reinforce the joint venture and thereby equip it to seize new opportunities in this market, A-One welcomed a new partner, the engineering and construction specialists, Costain, to become A-One+. The aim was to be in a position to tackle an area with a more complex structure, a strategy that was to rapidly pay off since A-One+ secured the contract for the very difficult-to-manage area 10 the following year. The level of services provided by the joint venture in these first two areas set the standard, and A-One+ was awarded the contract for area 7 in 2008, followed by area 12 in 2009, both of which were secured as a result of a very high quality score.

High-quality teams
The activities covered by a MAC contract have turned out to be extremely varied. Working round the clock, seven days a week, all year round, A-One+ teams are responsible for monitoring carriageway and engineering structures, defining the work to be carried out, launching bidding processes, implementing work, including layout modifications where necessary, handling emergency situations (including >

VMT CELL
EXPANDING THE OFFER AND TAKING THE NETWORK INTO THE FUTURE
The VMT (Value Management Team) cell, which has been up and running since October 2009, was created by Colas Ltd to take its partnership approach with clients one step further. “The idea is to help clients see their network in a different light and look to the future,” explains Frédéric Roussel, CEO of Colas Ltd and Colas’ Managing Director, Northern Europe. “This means suggesting the investments we believe are useful for the development and management of our client’s network and to secure its future. To do this, we primarily make use of the Group’s innovative products and techniques, along with skills and know-how stemming from PFI in Portsmouth.” The VMT’s proposals all fit squarely with MAC strategies: offering a broader range of services, improved network diagnostics, development of long-term scenarios, consideration of carbon footprint, etc.
bad weather), etc. “Whenever a hazard to motorists is identified by an agent travelling on the network, the intervention procedure is triggered straight away and an ISU (Incident Support Unit) is sent out as soon as possible to get traffic moving safely again. If the fault identified is not in need of urgent attention, the work is scheduled for a later date. Planned by the joint venture and carried out by our own teams or by accredited service providers,” adds Adrian Sheppard. Other operations tend to be more routine: maintenance, green space management, garbage collection.

In order to constantly improve the quality of work and the efficiency of its 2,000 employees and the operators tasked with carrying out certain jobs, A-One+ organizes regular training courses. This is vital since under the terms of MAC contracts the new contractor has to take on the employees of the

> "Whenever a hazard to motorists is identified by an agent, the intervention procedure is triggered and an ISU (Incident Support Unit) is sent out as soon as possible to get traffic moving safely again. If the fault identified is not in need of urgent attention, the work is scheduled for a later date."
Exiting contractor. The four to six-month period immediately prior to the launch of a new contract is used to familiarize teams with the new corporate culture, particularly in terms of health & safety and operational standards. And to make sure that everything is ready for launch day, a dedicated team of around 30 people works hard to make sure that all aspects of the contract are ready to be put into operation.

**Strict controls**

The Highways Agency requires its MAC service providers to meet four major objectives: improved journey times, better traffic flow, network safety, protection of the environment. To monitor the performance of its contractors, the agency conducts a monthly evaluation using fifteen criteria. The scores obtained are then compared between each area. In addition, a highly detailed five-day audit is conducted every six months. Finally, a yearly meeting is held to give all players an opportunity to come together and discuss performance, strategy and the future. A-One+ has achieved outstanding scores and enjoys a transparent and stimulating relationship built on trust with the Highways Agency.

**Investing in the long term**

Colas Ltd intends to continue down the same road with these contracts, which enable it to invest in the long term and draw on its solid experience. It plans to further develop the use of even longer-term contracts, building on the success of the PFI
In MAC contracts, the new contractor has to take on the employees of the exiting contractor. The four to six-month period prior to the launch of a new contract is used to familiarize teams with the new corporate culture.
Public-private partnership contract signed for a period of 25 years in 2004 (via Ensign, a subsidiary of Colas Ltd and Colas SA) with the city of Portsmouth for the renovation and maintenance of its road network. Long contracts of this type are a real ‘plus’ in these times of economic crisis. “As part of its economic recovery plan, the British government has invested in infrastructures and MAC contracts have reaped the benefits: with spending up by 30% in 2009,” specifies Adrian Sheppard. However, the market is not unlimited: should the area 14 contract be renewed in 2010, A-One+ will not be allowed to tender for a MAC contract elsewhere, since the rules stipulate that a single contractor cannot manage more than 33% of the network. Colas Ltd and its partners may well turn their attention to Scotland, which has its own version of the MAC contract! Watch this space…

ADRIAN SHEPPARD
CONSTANTLY ON THE MOVE

Now Highways Services Director (Colas Ltd), Adrian Sheppard has been with the Group since 2004. With an extensive range of responsibilities, including the construction of strategic partnerships, the commercial development of A-One+, commercial activities and responding to calls for bids, he’s always prepared to go the extra mile for his job. He’s passionate about the sheer diversity of his missions that have him constantly on the move: “No two days are ever the same. I hate being stuck in an office so, as far as I’m concerned, I’ve got the ideal job! I’m always out and about meeting teams, clients and partners and trying to solve a whole range of problems,” he enthuses. Committed and motivated, Adrian Sheppard thrives on the challenges the Highways Agency – a client he describes as “stimulating” – constantly sends his way. And this determination to do his very best for Colas isn’t confined to his native country. He’d love to contribute further to the Group’s success elsewhere in Europe, or even in the United States.

RIAAN FUCHS
A POSITIVE CHANGE

As head of area 10’s incident support unit (ISU), Riaan Fuchs has worked for A-One+ since the joint venture won the contract back in November 2007. “The change wasn’t easy because we’d had no previous experience of working with a MAC contract,” he recalls. “We had to learn a new approach to working and hone our expertise. Our efforts have certainly paid off and we’ve reaped the rewards since! Today, we’re once again running a perfectly oiled operation and we’re improving as a team every day.” The outstanding results revealed by the key performance indicators – measured monthly by the Highways Agency – are testimony to this. Supported by 29 operators and a team manager, Riaan Fuchs supervises all motorway and maintenance operations and coordinates emergency intervention teams in the event of a serious incident. It’s a time-consuming yet highly motivating remit for an employee who enjoys teamwork more than anything else.

ROY SEWELL
SERVING MOTORISTS

The philosophy of Roy Sewell, a member of the Brinnington Incident Support Unit (ISU) in area 10 is a simple one: assist. “That’s what I love about my job more than anything else! Giving assistance and ensuring roads are as passable and as safe as possible. I always tell myself that my family could be using the road in question! Motivation enough to get it right and do the job as well as I can,” he confides. Working in tandem with a colleague, he’s out on the road from 5 a.m. to 2 p.m. His day-to-day work is very varied: safety inspections, clearing garbage from roads and verges, checking traffic signing, safety barriers and the condition of the road surface, etc. If he finds a pothole, he either fills it himself straight away or organizes for it to be dealt with if the hole is too big. And it isn’t unheard of for Roy Sewell to come to the rescue of animals stuck in the middle of the road! “You’d never believe what we sometimes find on a road or what can fall from a vehicle,” he laughs.
They are equipment engineers, major account managers, operators...

They all do their jobs with enthusiasm and have decided to share their daily routine and their projects with us.

"I was given some very interesting jobs early on"
“Ready and raring to go!”

ROCKY FRAZIER
SITE SUPERVISOR
BARRETT INDUSTRIES
UNITED STATES

Rocky Frazier has been working for Barrett Industries in Michigan for twenty-two years. After working in three different asphalt plants, he has been the Romulus site supervisor for the last thirteen years. “I’m in charge of making sure that we provide the highest quality as far as products and services are concerned. I absolutely love the diversity of the job and I really enjoy negotiating with customers and suppliers,” he explains. From Alaska to Michigan, Rocky has lost count of the number of sites he has worked on. His reward came in 2005, when he was invited to attend the Colas Compagnons de la Route seminar in Morocco. Desert, camels, sunshine and palm groves…, Rocky was thrilled to discover the magic of a country thousands of miles from home and to share a great time with 800 of the Group’s skilled workers attending the seminar. “It was a true honor for me to be invited. I came away with some fabulous memories.” Although his responsibilities take up a great deal of his time, Rocky always finds a moment to fit in his other great passion: fishing. “It’s really important to set aside time to relax. With my feet in the water, I can forget all about the day’s stress and strain and make sure I’m ready and raring to go for the next project,” he smiles.
“I’m gaining in confidence every day”

REMY BOUCAUD
CATENARY SYSTEMS WORKER
COLAS RAIL
FRANCE

There was nothing in Rémy Boucaud’s background to suggest he would end up working on the railways. His first career choice was as a baker. So why the change? “A friend of mine worked in the sector and told me about his job. I sent a résumé just to see what would come of it and Colas Rail offered me a place on a training program to become a catenary systems worker.” So in March 2008, Rémy left the bread ovens behind him to study at the Clément-Ader vocational high school in Samatan, in the Toulouse region of southwest France, where Colas Rail runs a training program. He spent a year there learning about rail track infrastructures, techniques, catenary installation, track maintenance, etc. He suddenly found himself immersed in an unfamiliar environment that absolutely fascinated him. “The training program I was on lasted a total of 450 hours. I’d spend a month in the classroom, followed by a month working trackside,” he explains. In March 2009, having successfully completed the training program, he was offered a job by Colas Rail that saw him head to Lyon and the C1C2 multi-modal platform that handles the electric bus and tram systems. Rémy travels all over France working on projects throughout the country. “My ambition is to become foreman and, who knows, even superintendent,” he confides. “And maybe one day, I’ll climb even higher up the ladder, who knows…”

ROUTES No. 24 – January 2010
I love the cross-disciplinary nature of my job!

STEPHANIE MINNEBOIS
DIVISION SUPERVISOR
DESIGN AND ENGINEERING
SCREG ILE-DE-FRANCE –
NORMANDIE
FRANCE

Stéphanie Minnebois oozes enthusiasm when she talks about her job! As head of the design and engineering division at Screg Ile-de-France-Normandie’s head office, she manages, structures and coordinates all the subsidiary’s design activities. “Just think of me as a kind of ‘prototype’ she explains with a smile. The post was created to bring together employees working in the design and engineering bureaus of the different profit centers, the aim being to give the business a more cohesive structure and take it forward. My mission is to train, advise, analyze and support.”

When it comes to understanding employees’ concerns, Stéphanie always has her finger on the pulse, regularly going out to the company’s various design and engineering bureaus. The second aspect of her job involves managing specific projects either on a design/construction or PPP basis. “I’m often involved in projects that require specialist expertise. I have to intervene at a very early stage and sometimes coordinate a multitude of different players.” Stéphanie’s experience and versatility allow her to act as a highly effective interface between the commercial, technical and legal aspects of a project, as well as between the various partners involved. “It’s a tough job but I love it,” she confides. “Every day is a brand new adventure that brings its share of encounters, discussions and challenges to be met.”

ROUTES No. 24 – January 2010
EMILIE CAVALLARO
MAJOR CLIENT SUPERVISOR
SCREG
ECHANGEUR BOULOGNE
FRANCE

Armed with a degree in mechanical engineering from INSA Lyon as well as a business school degree, Emilie Cavallaro joined Saur France in Lyon as an auditor in the Finance Department. She later moved to Paris where she got a job with Bouygues, spending four years as a real estate development officer with Sodearif (a subsidiary of Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France). “It was there that I first worked with Screg’s teams, because on logistics platform projects, a lot of time is spent on earthworks and main services – roads, drainage and water. We sometimes submitted joint bids when opportunities arose,” specifies Emilie. A year ago, she joined Colas’ head office at Echangeur Boulogne, as Major Client supervisor within the Screg Sales department. She is now responsible for centralized private clients who launch projects throughout France. “No two days are ever alike: one day, I can be liaising with a particular profit center, client or contractor, the next I can be visiting jobsites with customers, chairing working groups and subsidiary meetings or attending trade fairs…” A hands-on job if ever there was one.
"When I go home, I feel it's been a job well done..."

VINCENT TURCOTTE
OPERATOR
SINTRA INC.
CANADA

As far as Vincent Turcotte is concerned, loyalty really means something. Vincent, now 39, has only ever worked for one company: Sintra, the Quebec-based subsidiary. "I've worked for Sintra practically my whole life," he recounts. "When I was 15, I spent the summer directing traffic for the company. Two years later, I was offered an apprenticeship as a weighman and then at the age of 19 I was hired as a machine operator." At the age of 20, his blemish-free career took him to work in an asphalt plant: "From a control room, I produce the various asphalt mixes required by the customers," explains Vincent. He owes his almost encyclopedic knowledge of asphalt mixes to an older, very experienced colleague, as well as numerous in-company training courses covering combustion, screening, drying, recycling, etc. "I love the really big projects, when operators have to be able to push the plant's capacities to the limit to deliver the production volumes required. At the end of each day, I feel it's been a job well done." After work, Vincent goes home to his wife and young son. And when work commitments allow, he likes nothing better than a game of hockey. ■
"I just love the diversity of this job!"

YANN DROUGLAZET
EQUIPMENT ENGINEER
SACER PARIS-NORD-EST
FRANCE

After studying a wide range of subjects – site dangers, pollution prevention-control and crisis management to name but a few – Yann Drouglazet is now an industrial safety expert. In November 2007, he graduated from the Alès National Engineering School with a Masters in ‘Industrial and Environmental Safety’ and was offered an internship in the Group’s Environment Department. “This was my first contact ever with Colas. I was asked to produce an industrial risk management manual for employees, covering all the Group’s installations.” At the end of his internship, Yann was hired as a Civil Engineering equipment maintenance manager with SCPR (Colas’ crushing and prefabrication subsidiary on Reunion Island). In August 2009, he headed to Mayotte as a replacement for a breakdown team manager. “On Reunion Island I gained a lot of experience in quarrying. In Mayotte, I discovered the world of construction sites, with new constraints, new skills and new techniques. What I loved more than anything else was the sheer diversity of the job: one day I could be working on a power plant and the next, a boat. And the next week again I could be building a road…” Today, Yann is continuing his adventure with Sacer Paris-Nord-Est.
Sébastien Chatard is a real globetrotter. A graduate of CNAM (French National School of Engineering and Technology), the young engineer began his Colas career far from home in 2006. “For my final internship, I spent a year working in the Group’s laboratories in Bangkok, Thailand.” In 2007 and armed with his qualification, he was hired by Colas Sud-Ouest where he undertook a three-month training course, learning about the nuts and bolts of jobsite construction work. “It was during this period that my career really began, acquiring skills in everything from emulsion techniques to cold recycling and team management.” In June 2009, following a further stint in Bangkok, Sébastien took his wife and two children to Australia where he was appointed technology and development supervisor for Western Australia.

From relations with customers and local authorities to manufacturing process management, etc., Sébastien acts as the link between the various site players and production. So what about his life as an expatriate? “Discovering new countries, new lifestyles and different working methods is extremely fulfilling for me as an individual and highly formative from a career point of view.”
“This is far more than just a job to me, it’s a family…”

NARCISSE AZOR
ASPHALT PLANT SUPERVISOR
GTOI
REUNION ISLAND

With thirty years’ experience at GTOI, Narcisse Azor knows everything there is to know about asphalt mixes, from maintenance and production of asphalt mix and emulsion right down to team management. Narcisse is a versatile man whose natural curiosity hasn’t waned with time. “In thirty years in the business, I’ve seen products and techniques evolve and I’ve never tired of it!” he enthuses. He began his career as an electrician based in Paris. In 1972, he returned home to his native Reunion Island, where he was taken on as an electromechanical technician at Segeform Reunion. When the company joined forces with GTOI at the end of the 1970s, Narcisse was promoted. “I was offered a number of interesting jobs in mixing and emulsion plants in various countries in the Indian Ocean/Pacific zone.” In 2002, his technical expertise and passion for the business helped him win second prize in the Innovation competition organized by the Group for the invention of a waste asphalt collection vat. “GTOI is far more than just a job to me: it’s a family in which recognition and trust mean everything.” Now 57 years old, Narcisse, who did his military service with the Paris fire service, still finds time to indulge in a spot of swimming, his favorite sport. ■
“Constantly learning through contact with other professions”

SARAH DE CUYPER
EXTERNAL CONTROL SUPERVISOR
COLAS EST
FRANCE

Where Sarah de Cuyper is concerned, roads and passion go hand in hand. Having completed a technical institute course in civil engineering followed by a degree in road mechanics, she began her career in a French regional infrastructure division (DDE) before joining Colas Est’s lab in Dijon, in 2006. “I needed to extend my technical expertise. Colas’ research and development activities fascinated me from the outset!” Her work involved tests on binders, asphalt mix design, field application, monitoring, jobsite controls, etc. And this hunger for learning paid off when, in 2008, she was appointed to the position of external control supervisor on the Reims tramway project involving Colas Est, Sreg Est and Colas Rail. This is a large-scale project and she has to juggle a range of responsibilities, from quality management to technical support and advice to name just a few. “I have to be everywhere at once but it’s the sheer diversity of the job that makes it so interesting. I’m learning a lot. I’d never been involved in an urban project prior to this. It has its own demands and specific technical characteristics.” Working within a group of companies is also an ideal way of gaining a broader knowledge through contact with employees from different fields. “We’re one big family and everyone brings their own specific expertise. And the synergy works well.”
When Somaro becomes Aximum... 

Road marking, safety systems, traffic signaling, road management, etc. An umbrella group for some twenty road equipment and service companies, Aximum – the European leader in road safety – is the new name of the Group’s safety and signaling subsidiary.
How can some twenty subsidiaries be brought together effectively within a single company? This was the question Christophe Mitridati, CEO of Aximum (formerly known as Somaro), turned his attention to in 2008.

“What we had were several companies working independently with no common synergy,” explains Christophe Mitridati. “And yet they were all operating in the field of road equipment and safety. We had reached a point where we could no longer expand through external growth alone.” Many brands meant little visibility. This was true from the customers’ point of view, first of all, since they only associated Somaro, the ‘parent company’, with safety equipment, a tiny part of the brand’s activity.

Secondly, from the employees’ point of view, they were lost within a maze of entities. “On jobsites, employees discovered they were in fact working for the same company, under different brands. In some cities, there were five entities occupying different premises. Teams could meet customers and sign contracts on the same day without ever consulting each other,” recalls Christophe Mitridati.

A streamlined organization

In 2008, Somaro, the reference brand and French leader in the road safety equipment sector, celebrated fifty years of existence. For Christophe Mitridati and his colleagues, it was an ideal opportunity to speed up the transition process. Through the ‘Cap 2010’
already had its own sales network, services are divided into six regional departments associated with sales departments.

Longstanding expertise

For more than fifty years, the company has been providing its expertise and know-how in the processes involved in installing, laying and constructing road equipment (safety systems, road marking, public lighting, traffic control). As Pascal Le Bris, Services Manager, explains, “the services
aspect of Aximum’s business can be summed up in three words: analyze, equip, manage. Our core business involves installing equipment and managing roadways, but we also offer a diagnostic service for customers wishing to have information that would be useful for the design of their development projects. Network appraisals, reports, maps, mobility plans, etc., Aximum offers solutions tailored to the needs of regional authorities and private operators.

Now, with the Expert project, Aximum Services goes well beyond its development and equipment missions. Launched in 2009, this new project involves conducting highway safety audits in anticipation of new European standards. “The regulatory context is evolving all the time and the RNER (French road equipment regulatory body) now requires contractors to analyze the configuration of sections of highway to be worked on before a decision to install safety systems is taken,” explains Pascal Le Bris. Given this new requirement, Aximum is building an exhaustive database of the safety systems already in place and carrying out a probability analysis relating to the likelihood of accidents and their impact on different users. We offer the most appropriate systems based on an analysis of the data generated.” Using cutting-edge tools and software such as Viapix, Autocad and Vianova – a 3D modeling tool for one or several sections – Aximum offers decision-making and planning support for a range of construction projects.

Service packages
In addition to managing and equipping roads, Aximum has also established itself as an extremely powerful player when it comes to new European standards. Upstream of any legislation, the company has proved its capacity to anticipate, certifying NF (French standard) safety systems as being compliant with new EC standards. Moreover, Aximum has expanded its range of services by offering special packages. With Axitram, the company is able to equip and protect a complete tramway work site from A to Z – three-color signaling, pedestrian and tree protection, traffic flow, road marking, traffic signaling. With Axisite, the same spectrum of services for industrial sites: parking lots, disabled spaces, pedestrian walkways within a plant, building guardrails, access control management, etc. Aximum has a solution on every front.

Innovation at all times
The other strategic front is innovation. Once again, Aximum has made the most of the reorganization to boost its innovative capacities. Its technological intelligence cell analyzes market trends, unearths technical opportunities and anticipates product developments, enabling Aximum to assert itself as the key player in the field of new highway equipment and safety techniques.

For example, in addition to Ostréa®, the thermoplastic surface treatment based on >
Oyster shells, soy oil and pine resin, the company’s laboratories have developed the latest generation of products, such as Captor®, an automatic control system designed to catch motorists running a red light, Elise®, the first all-electric road marking machine, the GSE+ guardrail, the first CE-certified guardrail without positioner and Sonorive®, a sound marking system, to name but a few.

Finally, with Infracall®, an automatic intervention activation system, Aximum has once again demonstrated that its technological development expertise is at the cutting-edge of innovation. “This communicating infrastructure makes it possible for us to fit electronic sensors to highway equipment, such as crash cushions and guardrails, etc.,” explains Philippe Harelle, Industrial Manager. “In the event of an impact, a signal is sent through to a call center, which then issues a call to the rescue services who are able to go directly to the scene of the accident.”

In synergy

Quality, safety, environment and competitiveness: Aximum’s research efforts are distributed between a number of different offices and laboratories. Electronic products are looked after by three design and engineering departments and there is another one for safety products. Three laboratories and a mechanics R&D department look after machines and marking products. It was far more difficult to pool expertise during the Somaro era. “For some activities, such as electronics, there were three different R&D departments, one in each entity,” describes Philippe Harelle. “By merging these three departments into a single R&D department for electronic products we no longer have a situation whereby resources are widely dispersed. Hence performance is now greatly enhanced.” Pooled expertise also means better collaboration. “The more innovative we are in our industrial development, the more our research will benefit from the innovation. Aximum will then have much greater influence in an increasingly competitive market,” analyzes Philippe Harelle.

The complementary nature of the businesses further enhances Aximum’s position as European market leader and unique partner when it comes to highway safety. Safer, more technologically advanced, more innovative… the road ahead is a smooth one with Aximum.

AXIMUM IN A FEW FIGURES

2,000 employees
10 plants
120 sales offices in France
3 subsidiaries in Europe (Netherlands, Czech Republic and Croatia)
1,800 vehicles and heavy construction machines

0 810 AXIMUM:
ONE NUMBER FOR ALL!

Launched in November to coincide with the French Mayor’s Convention, 0 810 AXIMUM is a unique telephone number that gives quick and easy access to all the Group’s offers. Thierry Loisel, Marketing and Communication Manager, explains: “The idea was to give Aximum’s existing and prospective customers a single telephone contact number, and, if possible, one that would be easy to remember! Hence the use of Aximum’s name in the number itself. In digits, it represents 0 810 29 46 86, but it is far simpler for city halls and regional councils to memorize 0 810 AXIMUM! The number is available round the clock, every day of the year. This means that a mayor, for example, can now call over the weekend or late in the evenings during the week; the operator will take the call and send an SMS to the appropriate rep. Ultimately, it will be possible to incorporate further value-added services. This is simply the beginning of a customer-oriented marketing policy designed to generate commercial value for Aximum.”

0 810 AXIMUM: ONE NUMBER FOR ALL!

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INNOVATION HAS ITS EYE ON MOTORISTS
Thanks to its technological intelligence unit, Aximum develops new latest-generation products, such as Captor®, an automatic control system designed to catch motorists running a red light.
Will Reunion Island soon have its own tram-train system? The project has already been on the cards for several years: a 41-km route with 28 stops, linking five towns, from Saint-Paul to Sainte-Marie via Saint-Denis and La Montagne. It’s the biggest public-private partnership (PPP) rail infrastructure project in 2009 in the European Union (Reunion Island is a French Département), covering design, construction, supply of rolling stock, operation and finance.

The Tram’Tiss consortium, including Colas through GTOI, its Reunion Island subsidiary, and Colas Rail, as well as Bouygues Travaux Publics, won the contract to build the regional tram-train system. The contract was signed at the start of December, with the proviso that additional funding is forthcoming. So there’s still one last obstacle to be overcome before the project can go ahead.

Four years’ preparation for five years of construction

“With this project, negotiations began at a very early stage. Numerous discussions took place with consortium members, the customer and, more generally, with all the partners involved,” explains Inouk Moncorgé, CEO of Tram’Tiss. The other specific feature is the highly technical nature of the project, relating to the quality development of each side of a 16-km section of the route in a dense urban environment, the building of 24 engineering structures and the boring of 12 km of tunnel in 3 roughly equal sections. “It took four years to put together the bid,” continues Inouk Moncorgé. Around one hundred people from the various companies – including fifty or so from Colas and GTOI on a full-time basis, and as many as 85 at the height of proceedings – worked on the bid. If the final obstacles are removed, the Tram’Tiss consortium is due to deliver the new tram-train in two phases: the North sector between Saint-Denis and Sainte-Marie in December 2013 and the remainder in December 2016.

An outstanding reference

It’s not difficult to imagine the importance of a project on this scale for GTOI and Colas Rail. Should it actually go ahead, it would represent a significant volume of business for several years. It would also be an outstanding reference for the two subsidiaries, as well as for Colas!
The Reunion Island’s tram-train will link five towns from Saint-Paul to Sainte-Marie via Saint-Denis and La Montagne. It will be 41-km long and have 28 stops.
Located in Nancy, Echangeur Est is the latest addition to the Group’s joint regional head offices in France.

Since May 2009, the head offices of Colas Est and Scrég Est have been housed in the same brand new building, in Nancy, eastern France. Located in the Austrasie development zone, Echangeur Est boasts cutting-edge facilities that include a 170-seat amphitheater, a video-conference room, versatile and modular meeting rooms, and more. With its photovoltaic panels, green roof and extracted air heat recovery system, the building is ahead of the field when it comes to environmental technologies. The materials used for the façades and floors were selected based on the proximity of supply sources, the aim being to keep transportation to a minimum throughout the construction phase with pre-fabricated white concrete blocks from Reims and sandstone slabs from Champenay. Echangeur Est is also a smart building – employees are able to control some of its functions (position of window blinds, office lighting, etc.) from their PC.

This building is the latest addition to the Group’s joint regional head office network in France. The 80 employees based there enjoy an excellent working environment and cross-functional exchange within the Group has been greatly enhanced. Colas Est and Scrég Est are now in a position to provide their customers and profit centers with optimized services and support.
Having been granted an extension to its operating license, SNC Carrière de Trapp will continue to supply ballast for the construction of the Rhine-Rhône high-speed rail line.

SNC Carrière de Trapp signs on for another 30 years

Specializing in the extraction, processing and marketing of materials for road (sand and aggregates) and rail (ballast) construction, SNC Carrière de Trapp (Screg Est and Colas Est) is celebrating ten years as part of the Group with flourish. And for very good reason! The local authority has awarded the subsidiary operating licenses for three sites – Raon-l’Étape (Vosges), Hersbach and Champenay (Bas-Rhin) – for the next thirty years. Permission has also been granted to extend the Raon-l’Étape site (which can currently produce up to 3 million metric tons per year) by 68 acres and the Hersbach site (producing up to 600,000 tons annually) by 72 acres. These authorizations are the result of a lengthy process. The company spent five years in close discussions with residents, associations and elected officials to win them over to the cause. It has made a number of environmental commitments, particularly in terms of restricting truck movements, and undertaken to invest in equipment (a new crusher, for example). The extension to the operating license secures the jobs of the 78 people employed at the sites, thereby supporting the local economy.
Colas Geneva’s new asphalt plant is capable of recycling up to 50% of reclaimed asphalt pavement.

Back in June, Jean Beauverd, CEO of Colas Suisse, Adriano Guzzo, Manager of Colas Geneva, and Marc Maranzana, Equipment Manager with Colas Suisse, unveiled Colas Geneva’s very latest asphalt plant before an audience of customers and local personalities. Located in Vernier, Switzerland, this plant, built using 430 tons of steel and standing 37 meters high, is capable of re-using up to 50% of reclaimed asphalt pavement or RAP. Previous facilities of a similar type had a maximum recycling capacity of just 15%. What’s more, this brand new production tool optimizes energy consumption, cuts greenhouse gas emissions and reduces noise pollution thanks to a containment wall. It is a new-generation facility that complies with the very latest environmental legislation. On opening day, visitors also got a chance to admire Elise®, a 100% electric road marking machine, developed by Aximum, and recently acquired by Colas Geneva.
The new QSE-certified binder plant in Toulouse is fitted with systems designed to reduce its impact on the environment to an absolute minimum.

Toulouse: a high-performance binder plant

The new LRMP binder plant in Toulouse has been up and running since August. It replaces two former bitumen emulsion production facilities located in Fenouillet and Fondere. “These production units had been in service for more than twenty-five years and were coming to the end of their service life. Their production capacities no longer matched our requirements,” explains Hubert de Chasteigner, Product Sector Supervisor. The Toulouse plant has been built on an old industrial site. Work took a year and included demolition of the existing plant, clean-up of a site that had been in use for more than seventy years and construction of new buildings. Designed with the very latest techniques, this plant has been awarded QSE (Quality, Safety, Environment) certification. It is equipped with water and energy recovery systems, retention and containment systems, condensing vents on tanks, etc., in order to reduce its impact on the environment to an absolute minimum. Built on a scale that will enable it to produce between 30,000 and 40,000 tons of emulsions and 8,000 tons of modified asphalt per annum, this new site should meet the Group’s needs throughout the entire Midi-Pyrénées region in southwest France.
Colas Nord-Picardie’s new asphalt production and road materials recycling site is committed to the French eco-friendly label Palme.

In June, Colas Nord-Picardie opened a new industrial site, dubbed MVS (Matériaux Val de Scarpe). Located in Corbehem, near Douai, this platform incorporates a production plant for a whole range of asphalt mixes (hot, warm, cold, colored, recycled, plant-based). The aim is to produce around 120,000 tons of mix every year. The site also contains a recycling area for materials recovered from road demolition and another area dedicated to the provision of road construction materials.

The production facility has been designed to keep the environmental impact of its activities to an absolute minimum. For example, energy is provided by gas and electricity and the aggregates required for asphalt production are primarily transported by boat. Ultimately trains will also be used. Committed to the French eco-friendly label program Palme, MVS has set its sights on ISO 14001 certification. The new platform has also boosted local employment, with fourteen people hired to work on the site or in nearby companies.
Argeco Développement’s plant in Fumel manufactures kaolin-based cement substitutes.

Colas Midi-Méditerranée has acquired a 25% share in Argeco Développement, a manufacturer of hydraulic binders located in Fumel (Lot-et-Garonne). “Colas Midi-Méditerranée began talking to Argeco because it was interested in the cement substitutes manufactured by the company,” explains Jacky Halbout, Industries and Development Manager at Colas Midi-Méditerranée. The Fumel plant develops some highly innovative products, using a base clay known as kaolin. “Through a patented process called flash calcination, the kaolin is heated to a very high temperature, as a result of which it loses its absorbed water. We end up with metakaolin, which can then react with an alkaline product like lime,” explains Jean-Paul Tardy, General Manager of Argeco Développement. Compared with cement, metakaolin is a far more environmentally-friendly product to work with: “While manufacturing 1 kg of cement generates 1 kg of CO₂ just 120 g of CO₂ are produced during the manufacture of 1 kg of metakaolin. What’s more, flash calcination uses little energy.” Given that metakaolin can be used as a cement substitute to the tune of 25% in the manufacture of concrete, the environmental benefits are considerable. The product is set to be integrated into European standards in 2010 and so the future looks promising for Argeco Développement.
The three new driving guides specifically written for drivers of the Group’s vehicles and machines are a useful addition to the company’s wide range of health and safety tools.

In April 2009, in its third Road Safety Charter, Colas made various commitments, including the publication of guides aimed at drivers of the Group’s vehicles and machines. Now published and ready to be distributed throughout the Group, three versions are available for three types of vehicle – heavy construction machines, heavy-duty trucks and light commercial vehicles. The guides contain all the rules and information drivers need to drive safely using as little fuel as possible, including the highway code, maintenance requirements and the golden rules of eco-driving. Employees are also warned about the dangers of driving after drinking alcohol or taking drugs or when tired. Significant space is devoted to reminding drivers of specific safety rules in place on jobsites: signaling, traffic plans, loading, unloading and properly securing loads. At the end of the guide, readers will find a range of practical data sheets for reporting daily use and anomalies, for example. Colas takes the safety of employees, users and local residents – on the road as well as jobsites – extremely seriously and these comprehensive guides are intended to reflect this. The company views safety as an integral and fundamental part of its responsible development approach and is constantly redoubling its health and safety efforts in order to further improve its long-term results.
The RM900 - HD100 ballast scarifying and screening machine is used to renew rail track ballast, especially on high-speed lines.

RM900 - HD100 is hardly a name that is going to set hearts racing but Colas Rail is extremely proud of its new machine, weighing 343 metric tons and measuring in at 88 meters long. The ballast scarifying and screening machine is used to renew rail track ballast, especially on high-speed lines. “This is an exceptionally powerful piece of equipment: compared to other existing machines, it can process 30% more ballast. This means that we are able to adopt a different approach to the way we work,” explains Pierre-Olivier Boutin, Manager of the Major Project profit center at Colas Rail. The RM900 - HD100 also offers improved track geometry following scarification, on both straight sections and bends. Some fifteen people are working with this new machine: “It was delivered at the end of June and went into service in July. It has been operating flat out since September in southeast Paris, a highly sensitive market where delays are not an option. To reach a performance like this in just two months is quite an achievement on the part of the teams,” underlines Pierre-Olivier Boutin. Colas Rail is the only company in France to be using the RM900 - HD100.
The fuel savings awareness campaign was launched in December, with posters, stickers, internal magazine inserts, etc.

Fuel savings: Colas on the campaign trail!

A major fuel savings awareness raising campaign was launched in December aimed at the Group’s 30,000 or so vehicle drivers and machine operators around the globe. The campaign slogan is “Together, let’s reduce our energy consumption.”

Target: a 20% reduction

Machines and vehicles account for three-quarters of the Group’s total fossil energy consumption. “Our objective is to cut fuel consumption by 20%. This can be achieved through the systematic integration of good practices without the need to change equipment. We prefer to act straight away rather than wait for a technological revolution and the arrival of more fuel-efficient vehicles,” explains Henri Molleron, Colas Environment Manager.

Simple changes…

Drivers and operators of the Group’s vehicles and machines are being asked to follow three ‘commandments’: don’t leave engines running for half an hour in the morning before driving away or starting work; drive calmly and gently, i.e. adopt a ‘smooth’ driving style; and, thirdly, turn off the engine after three minutes of idling. “Engines have evolved and manufacturers discourage drivers from...
preheating and idling,” points out Philippe Brissonneau, Colas Equipment Manager. “These are simple changes that we are recommending and the benefits will be immediate and significant.”

… with a triple benefit

“As well as the environmental benefits, this campaign will help save money,” comments Henri Molleron. “Safety – one of Colas’ main priorities – should also come out on top.” A smooth driving style combined with an engine that is switched off rather than left idling will help reduce the risks of accidents. Hence the campaign’s three-tiered theme, “savings, environment, safety.”

Rallying support

The success of the campaign will depend on the commitment of all drivers as well as workshop managers, foremen, dispatchers, safety and environment officers, heads of profit centers and all managerial staff. This campaign is of course not designed to overshadow other improvement initiatives – engine tuning, maintenance, jobsite organization, fuel management, etc.

The campaign has been designed around the theme of three pluses for triple benefits: savings, environment and safety.
In October, Philippe Tournier, Colas’ Human Resources Manager, signed a memorandum of understanding with Pierre Blanc, General Manager of Agefiph.

Colas is strongly committed to recruiting disabled people and keeping on employees who have been the victims of an accident or illness. This commitment has been turned into a short film called Determinations. Sent out to France’s 36,000 mayors, regional council heads, members of parliament and senators, this DVD has received a lot of positive feedback. “All these initiatives reflect a genuine commitment to social solidarity,” hails the Mayor of Tours. And the Mayor of Epagne-Epagnette concludes: “Colas has stood out for a while as far as we’re concerned…”. What’s more, the Group has gone a step further by signing a memorandum of understanding with Agefiph (French Association for the management of funding for the integration of disabled workers). Within the terms of the agreement, all French subsidiaries are required to go through a diagnostic-advisory process to identify initiatives to promote the employment of disabled workers.

A symbol of the Group’s commitment in this area is its hiring of the visually-impaired Paralympic athlete Assia El-Hannouni. Since 2006, Colas has been sponsoring the athlete, who won two gold and two silver medals at the Beijing Paralympic games. Assia works as a Communication Assistant in the Group’s Communications Department, based in the Boulogne head office.
Screg Sud-Ouest sponsored the Urt-Bayonne international paracycling race. Pictured from left to right: Enrique Porto and his guide Abel Fraga, overall winners, and Philippe Durand, CEO of Screg Sud-Ouest.

In December 2008, Screg Sud-Ouest signed a sponsorship deal with the Aquitaine regional disabled sports committee. The partnership aims to help top-level disabled athletes realize their dreams, use training courses and placements to promote greater proximity between the company's employees and disabled people and increase the number of disabled people hired to work for the company. Screg Sud-Ouest is sponsoring numerous projects, including the Urt-Bayonne paracycling race, for which it is providing both logistics support and equipment. The subsidiary is also involved in the "Pour un sport ensemble" ("United in sport") initiative. This involves several full-day events giving able-bodied and disabled athletes the chance to enjoy taking part in sports together. Finally, the subsidiary implements awareness-raising initiatives aimed at its employees (safety workshops, talks given by members of the Aquitaine regional disabled sports committee, disability information campaigns, etc.). These initiatives are all part of the first phase of "Handicap", the corporate project launched as part of Screg Sud-Ouest’s "Diversity" program. They provide a perfect illustration at a local level of the Group's global commitment to supporting the disabled. One such beneficiary is Assia El-Hannouni, the partially-sighted paralympic athlete, who has been sponsored by the Group since 2006.
The Colas Skilled Workers Guild has expanded beyond mainland France. The process began in Belgium, in 2008, with the creation of the Losange d’Or Skilled Workers Guild which has a membership of seven. This was followed in 2009 by the creation of the Fournaise Skilled Workers Guild (fourteen members) on Reunion Island, and the North America Skilled Workers Guild in Canada (also fourteen members). This international expansion may well continue in future years to incorporate English-speaking countries, in particular the United States. The guilds have been in existence for twenty years now and have more than proved their worth: they bring together outstanding employees as designated by their management – in all trades (machine operators, mechanics, welders, asphalt layers, etc.). Guild members benefit from specific training programs, particularly in the fields of corporate management, health, safety and the environment, as well as the support and training of new employees. They come together on a regular basis for site and company visits, project groups and annual general meetings.

The Colas Skilled Workers Guild goes international
Colas’ commitment to training is illustrated by the level of investment in the area, equal to 4% of payroll in France, i.e. more than double the legal minimum required.

**Crossroads**

**Human Resources**

**Training:** booklets guiding employees

A new French-language booklet, entitled "Moi, je me forme pour progresser dans mon métier" (Training: pave your own career path), has been sent out to all the Group’s employees based in France. "We were aware that management level employees were always seeking training opportunities while skilled workers weren't. This was often because they were unaware of the programs available or the process they had to go through to access them; and yet, 50% of the training programs are specifically for these workers," explains Philippe Morvan, the Group's training manager. Training is a vital part of every employee's working life, improving their efficiency and helping them advance in their careers. In much the same vein, a second booklet aimed at team managers is currently being sent out: "Like sports team coaches, they have to discuss and diagnose individual needs, motivate, etc.," continues Philippe Morvan. "It's a crucial role and one that has to be carried out as effectively as possible. This guide sets out the keys to success." Lastly, the training investment plan, used by entity managers and directors to focus and validate annual training plans, is also set to be modernized. Other supports are under consideration, such as 'logbooks' for new recruits.
Exhibitions, awards ceremonies, private viewings, meetings, sporting, environmental and social partnerships, etc. Here are some of the images illustrating what the Group has been up to in France and abroad.

▶ “FORMULA TAMARIND”
The new Tamarind Road, a 30-km link between St-Paul and L’Etang-Salé in Reunion Island, of which Colas subsidiary GTOI built 25%, was inaugurated in July by French Prime Minister François Fillon. Before it was opened to traffic, a Formula 1 event was held on the new road.
The Mayotte Post Office has issued two stamps depicting the new Mamoudzou City Hall and the Longoni power plant. Colas' local subsidiaries were involved in both of these construction projects.

A private viewing of the Colas Foundation's latest works was held in October at the corporate head office. 16 new paintings joined the collection, which now boasts almost 250 canvases.
FIRST HYBRID TRUCK
In September, Hervé Le Bouc, Colas’ CEO, was handed the keys to the Group’s first hybrid truck (internal combustion/electric motor) by Stefano Chmielewski, President of Renault Trucks. The two companies worked in partnership to develop the vehicle.

MONT SAINT-MICHEL CONVENTION
Around forty site supervisors from Sacer Atlantique’s Brittany-based profit centers came together to share their experiences at an open house event organized on Mont Saint-Michel.

ROUTE No. 24 – January 2010
More than 10,000 Malagasy children and their teachers have now visited Lemurs’ Park, which is sponsored by Colas Madagascar. Comics on biodiversity were handed out to all the children.

The theme of the latest conference was IT security. Left to right: M. Nowak (La Recherche), C. Blancher (EADS), A. Joux (French Defense Procurement Agency), M. Chappat (Colas R&D Manager).
PLANT SUPERVISORS’ CONVENTION
The Plant Supervisors’ Convention held in Paris in February 2009 brought together some 300 employees to discuss three themes: sharing, optimizing and anticipating.

COLAS’ WEBSITE WINS AN AWARD
In September, Colas won the best website award in the public works category, at the Construction and Property Industry’s Website Trophy Awards.
The Beauvais-Pierrelaye profit center won the Gaz de France-OPPBTP safety award in the "Industrial site construction project" category for the underground storage facility in Saint-Clair-sur-Epte in Val-d'Oise, near Paris. The site has Seveso 2 classification.

Colas won the 2009 Fimbacte Audiovisual Grand Prix for "Communicating in Sign Language", filmed at Colas Madagascar. The film highlights the Group’s initiatives to aid the integration of disabled employees.
Colas South Africa helps fund the NOAH association (Neighborhood Old Age Homes), whose mission is to assist poor elderly people in Western Cape province. They are given accommodation in homes that provide a range of services.

In November, the Thai subsidiary Tipco Asphalt Public Company Ltd celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in Bangkok. Joining in the celebrations were Ms. Anurat Tiamtian, Chairman of the Board of Tipco Asphalt, and Hervé Le Bouc, Chairman of Colas.

TIPCO CELEBRATES THIRTY YEARS
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SPONSORSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA
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In the Fall, technical managers from the Asia/Australia zone met in Malaysia. On the agenda were technical presentations, debates and a tour of the Kemaman refinery.

October saw 73 new members being officially welcomed into the Skilled Workers' Guild at an event held in Paris: a tour of head office and the CST, followed by an evening event at the Hôtel de la Marine.
MAYORS’ CONVENTION
In November, the Group attended the French Mayors’ Convention, held in Paris at the Porte de Versailles Exhibition Center. Colas presented its most innovative responsible development products and processes concerning road safety, environmental protection and improved city living. Screg used the event as an opportunity to launch a communication campaign on its warm asphalt mixes.

 routes No. 24 – January 2010
84 in the picture
On the Sacer booth, products in the range were displayed according to their primary benefit (savings, reduction, safety, comfort, etc.). For its part, Aximum, the Group’s road safety subsidiary, showed off its latest road safety and signaling equipment innovations: electric road marking machine, LED flashing lights, etc.
The Colas on Stage initiative was set up to act as a vehicle for passing on Colas management messages to employees throughout the world, supporting artistic talent and creation in the fields of music and dance.
Colas expands the scope of its corporate patronage...

Launched in September 2008, the Colas on Stage music and dance initiative added a new dimension to the company’s corporate patronage activities, which had previously focused primarily on painting, through the Colas Foundation. As is the case with the Colas Foundation, the purpose of Colas on Stage is to establish gateways between the worlds of art and roads.

Dating back to the 1990s with the creation of the Colas Foundation dedicated to painting, Colas’ corporate patronage activities were extended in 2008 with the introduction of the Colas on Stage program. These two forms of sponsorship place artistic creation at the heart of the day-to-day life of the company. So each year, canvases painted specifically for the Colas Foundation – the works of painters of all nationalities – have been used to celebrate the Group’s core business and represent its multicultural nature. And today, in a similar manner, Colas on Stage is intended to use music and dance to break down language and cultural barriers and act as a vehicle for passing management messages to employees. In 2008 and 2009, two themes formed the focus of attention: talents and transversality. 2010 will be the year of diversity.

Talent kicks off the show

Colas on Stage was officially launched in September 2008 by Gautier Capuçon, the internationally-renowned cellist, and Alexandra Bansch, choreographer and former soloist with the Béjart Ballet. To the music of Jean-Sebastian Bach’s 2nd suite, Transporting You, specifically created for >
Colas on Stage, revealed the work and excellence of these two outstanding talents, their exemplary nature and values. “Values that reflect those of the Group’s employees,” underlines Hervé Le Bouc. “Values that we want to promote in order to attract and keep the best.”

In association with the event, Gautier Capuçon was asked to speak at the Colas Universities about his passion, work, determination and experiences throughout the world. The idea behind these events was to understand the day-to-day life of a virtuoso artist and use him as a model for success for the Group’s own talent.

**2009: transversality**

In September, in order to illustrate transversality and the urgent need to establish gateways between everyone – the fundamental message of management – two young dancers, Alexandra Bansch and Denis Kuhnert, performed a work specifically choreographed for Colas on Stage. *Crossroad(s)* – combining contemporary dance and hip-hop to symbolize tradition and the street – highlighted day-to-day issues, the difficulties associated with understanding differences and the wealth that results when two different worlds meet. It was intended as an illustration of the importance...
within the company of being able to attract atypical profiles and building bridges between talents, in spite of reticence and resistance.

2010: diversity

This year, Colas on Stage will be working alongside Akram Khan, the famous British Indian choreographer and dancer, supporting his new project, Vertical Road. A melting pot of different nationalities, cultures and generations, Akram Kahn’s company is, through its dancers, the very embodiment of diversity. The show will be staged all around the world. Each date will be an opportunity for subsidiaries to share a magical moment of dance and emotion with invited guests and employees with diversity as the central message, emphasizing its importance for the enrichment of human resources within the company.

*Akram Kahn has recently starred in two global productions, Bahok and In-I (with Juliette Binoche).

Crossroad(s) illustrates the theme of transversality, combining hip-hop (Denis Kuhner) and contemporary dance (Alexandra Bansch).
Gautier Capuçon:
“Talent is worthless without hard work”

An internationally renowned cello virtuoso, Gautier Capuçon was invited to play as part of the Colas on Stage initiative and speak at the Colas Universities about his life and work. A partnership built on talent and excellence, providing a perfect illustration of the common values shared between the world of art and Colas.

How old were you when you first picked up a bow?
Gautier Capuçon: Music has always been an integral part of life in my family. My parents were passionate music lovers and they brought us up — my sister, brother and me — surrounded by music. We often went to classical concerts where we discovered new instruments and new composers and there was always background music on at home. It’s no accident that my brother is a violinist and my sister a pianist. Following a rather fruitless attempt at the violin, when I was four my parents handed me a cello and I fell in love with it! I took to it like a duck to water! And I was then lucky enough to pass through the hands of some outstanding teachers who instilled in me their own drive for excellence and perfection.

At the age of just 28, Gautier Capuçon is a cello virtuoso. Named “New talent of the year” at the 2001 Victoires de la musique competition, he’s won several international awards. Regularly invited to play by some of the world’s most prestigious conductors, he gives more than 140 concerts all around the globe every year. In 2008, his musical career crossed paths with Colas when he was asked to team up with the Group.
Tell us a bit about your musical career to date?
G. C.: It all began at the Conservatoire in Chambéry, where I was born. It was there that I had my first cello lessons and began to win awards. At the age of twelve, I left to study at the Conservatoire de Paris where I was taught by two of the biggest cello names, Annie Cochet-Zakine and Philippe Muller. I then moved to Vienna to study with Heinrich Schiff, the master of all cello players. Finally, I came back to France to start my career as a soloist.

How did you come to cross paths with Colas?
G. C.: I’d met Hervé Le Bouc a few years ago at a concert. When he founded Colas on Stage, he asked me to take part in the first production. Our partnership then morphed into a variety of forms. Colas supported me for the live recording of a concert given in Saint-Petersburg, Russia, on Christmas Eve 2008, with the Mariinsky Theater Orchestra, conducted by Valery Gergiev. The album (Virgin) will be released in January 2010. In much the same way, Colas is supporting my next concert in Paris on January 15 at the Salle Pleyel. I’ll be playing Cello Concerto No. 1 by Dmitri Chostakovitch with the Radio France Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Lionel Bringuier. In addition, I’ve spoken a number of times at the Colas Universities and had some interesting and unexpected encounters with some of the company’s managers.

What has been the aim of your lectures at the Colas Universities? How have they gone?
G. C.: It may seem odd for someone who performs to audiences of thousands, but the first time I got up to deliver a lecture to no more than thirty or so managers I was really nervous! I’d never done anything quite like it. It went without a hitch and the audience was clearly interested in what I did. Questions soon came thick and fast about my background, my life as a musician, concert tours, motivations and the way I manage my work…

On a day-to-day basis, what is life like for a young solo artist who regularly appears on the international stage?
G. C.: It’s an extremely rewarding life and one that dreams are made of, seen from the outside. But it can also be difficult to manage. I do a lot of traveling and I’m often alone. You have to learn to get your bearings, wherever you happen to be: read a score in an airplane, practice for rehearsals in the hotel room… Work rules my life.

Do you share common values with Colas’ employees?
G. C.: Whenever we get together at the Colas Universities, the areas we have in common and values we share quickly become apparent. We may speak different languages – roads for Colas, music for me – but we’re driven by the same determination to develop our art and increase our capacities tenfold. We share the same sense of commitment and responsibility, of relationships built on trust, respect and humility, of the need to question ourselves at all times. It doesn’t matter whether we’re talking about roads or music, we’re always striving for excellence.

How would you describe this partnership with Colas?
G. C.: The relationship I have with Colas goes well beyond sponsorship. It’s a creative cultural exchange between two worlds: the world of art and music, and the corporate world of Colas and its businesses.

What is it that drives you the most in this partnership?
G. C.: I love adventures and challenges, just like the people working at Colas. And it’s even better when these challenges are shared! Classical music for example suffers from prejudices that are hard to shake off: it’s elitist, incomprehensible, boring, etc. I’d love to shatter this image and show that classical music has universal appeal. Colas is helping me to achieve this through our partnership. Artists have always been supported by sponsors. But the alchemy we have is the stuff dreams are made of…

And do you have any other dreams?
G. C.: To play a Bach suite on an offshore oil rig!
Michel Maffesoli: “We need to pay more attention to the imaginary”

Who better than a sociologist to explain the current crisis? In his latest book, *Apocalypse* (CNRS Editions, 2009), Michel Maffesoli examines the fundamental changes causing upheaval in our times. What if the crisis went beyond economics…

Crisis, crisis, crisis… everybody’s talking about it. How would you define this period of economic instability?

Michel Maffesoli: The term economic crisis is excessively restrictive and used far too liberally. What we’re going through is a societal crisis, a moral crisis if you like. “Every era dreams its successor”, wrote Michelet. The major values upon which modern society was built are out of step with our time. Progress, the “work” ethic that evolved at the start of the 19th century – the cornerstone of all our institutions, reason established as a system of thought from the 17th century, utilitarianism, etc.: all these values are crumbling around us. In chemistry, when the various molecules that make up a given body are unable to stay together, they break up to create other molecules. Exactly the same process is occurring with the current
crisis. The values of modernity are gradually being replaced by new values and these values can really be observed amongst the younger generations.

What are these new values?

M. M.: Esthetics, the here and now, hedonism, the importance of the body, values of the imaginary and the recreational aspect of existence (games, dreams, festivity, etc.) are back with a vengeance. I'm talking here about a raft of collective emotions that are fundamentally at odds with the great modern work ethic. The younger generations no longer plan for the future, living instead from one day to the next. Creation, creativity, games, dreams and the imaginary are slowly but surely replacing the "work" value, as self-realization, as a purpose for energy mobilization. And there is nothing recent about this trend. It began back in the 1950s with the esthetization of existence and the birth of design, extending thereafter through the 1960s with student rebellions, anti-war protests and the major cultural and musical events. Throughout the first decade of the 21st century, the trend has become even more firmly entrenched, speeding up the transition process from modern values to post-modern values.

Where does the individual fit within the context of this change?

M. M.: The notion of the individual formed the basis for the invention of the modern world. Now, since the start of the 2000s, society has been living through an apocalypse in the etymological sense of the word: a post-modern world is emerging, challenging this notion of the individual, the linchpin of our thought system since the Middle Ages. This change can be explained by the increasing influence of emotion in a society that was previously guided by reason. People have aspirations to share their emotions. Rational institutions are giving way to post-modern tribes. The tribe is built on elective sociality, integrating the person rather than the individual. It permeates our ways of life, determines new rules of solidarity and brings an injection of fresh blood into the whole of society.

How will the advent of this new order take place? Can we expect to see increasing industrial conflict and the rejection of policy and leaders?

M. M.: Any change in era is as radical as climate change. Economic depression, moral or physical turmoil, political and institutional tensions, etc. are simply the convulsions of a disappearing civilization. The saturation of values that formed the bedrock of the 18th and 19th centuries leads to serious crises of identity and these are reflected in social violence: strikes, increasingly frequent industrial disputes, urban revolts, a widening gap between citizens and those who govern them, etc. But it's a necessary evil if we are to build the foundations of a new cycle.

Did you call your latest book Apocalypse in order to symbolize this change?

M. M.: Yes and no. I use the word “apocalypse” in its primary etymological sense, as, in actual fact, do theologians: “cover, shroud, hide,” then “disclose, reveal.” It should be interpreted as that which reveals the hidden, unveils a secret. We are going through a significant transition. It's the end of one era and the beginning of another. In a sense, our era is preparing for its own apocalypse, i.e. to be able to reveal what it was concealing.

Together with Georges Balandier and Louis-Vincent Thomas, you founded and manage the CEAQ, the French research center on the current and everyday. What is the sociological purpose of this center?

M. M.: The aim of the CEAQ is to promote fields and issues that conventional sociology considers to be minor. We're not going to content ourselves with looking at the sociology of work, of the family, of politics, etc. – i.e. the major institutions of conventional sociology – but rather demonstrate that the everyday, the banal, leisure and pleasure can just as easily come under the sociological spotlight. Each of these so-called secondary fields seems to me to be fundamental. I'd also add another important field, that of new technologies. Today, mobile phones, computers and the Internet prove that technology is not some isolated concept but something that is an integral part of our daily lives.

 ROUTES No. 24 – January 2010
Mette Rishøj: “Roads are symbolic of human energy”

Roads seem to be a recurring theme in your art. Can you tell us how your involvement with the Colas Foundation came about?

Mette Rishøj: When the Colas Foundation asked me to work on the theme of roads, I felt that I wanted to portray them in an optimistic light. They are a crucial part of today’s society, providing a link between people, a network of communication, transport and exchange, a gateway to the outside world… but in order to build roads we first have to destroy something.

In this picture produced for the Colas Foundation I focused on the destruction/construction cycle. Here, the machine is laying asphalt on the road. You would expect to see plumes of black smoke billowing out of the engine, but instead I’ve depicted the scene with a rainbow of flowers emerging from the vehicle.

I wanted to inject optimism, a sense of multicolored vitality, in order to demonstrate that although frightening, destruction is necessary.

You describe your art as “wild”, containing “brutal” action. Where do you draw your creative energy from?

M. R.: I’ve done an enormous amount of work on the themes of chaos, construction and demolition. I’ve always been fascinated by heavy machinery, industrial sites, steel, concrete and glass buildings. Together with acrylic, these materials form the original substance of my pictures. I’m especially fascinated by the endless pursuit of progress and the role and actions of man in this frenetic endeavor.