Six weeks of Change.

A life of Communication.

A dissertation on the internship at the
Change & Communication department of KBC Group ICT.

Dr. Ellen Van Praet

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree for Master in de Meertalige Bedrijfscommunicatie, by Marjolein Van Oudenhove.
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<tr>
<th>Dienst</th>
<th>ICT Change &amp; Communication</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stagebegeleider</td>
<td>Walter Carels</td>
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<td>Periode</td>
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| Taken tijdens de stage | • Analyse van een communicatiekanaal  
|                     | • Meewerken aan re-branding project  
<p>|                     | • Redactie van bedrijfsmagazine |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Bedrijf</th>
<th>KBC Global Services NV</th>
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<td>Bedrijvenlaan 4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2800 Mechelen</td>
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<td>Tel:</td>
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**Word of thanks**

This dissertation is only a reflection of my experiences at Group ICT during the last six weeks. Writing down the tasks and relating what I have learned during my internship has made me think about the chances I have been offered. I now realise that an internship is so much more than a mere completion of a study. It is challenging, it is difficult, it is rewarding, it is people, it is correcting yourself, it is negotiating, it is waking up early, it is using your creativity, it is testing your patience, and it is pleasant. In a word, it is reality.

I am grateful to many people who contributed to making my study and internship such an unforgettable time. First of all, I would like to thank Walter Carels, who made it possible for me to join his team for a while and who welcomed all my ideas and questions with an incredible enthusiasm. Thanks to him I have been able to use my creativity and knowledge to their full length in various challenging tasks. His way of managing his Change & Communication Team is something I look up to. Secondly, I would like to thank the whole Change & Communication Team of Group ICT, who accepted me in their group from the first day on and who advised and assisted me whenever I had a problem. Furthermore, I would like to render my thanks to the members of HI-group who were always in for a chat and a joke during the day at work.

I would also like to thank my parents for offering me the opportunity to keep on studying and for listening to me whenever I needed a chat. I am so glad that they supported me during this hard year and never stopped believing in me. I am happy too, that I could always count on my grandparents to talk or listen to me. Special thanks are going to my boyfriend who had a tough year too, but still managed to make me laugh or relax at the right moments.

I would like to thank my friends as well, whom I barely saw this year due to lack of time, but who were always there to chat or get together when I had some spare time. Last but not least, I send my thanks to Dorien. We spend a lot of time together during the past year and we succeeded in everything we shared as a team. I know we are friends for life.
Thanks!
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Preface

In November 2007, Dorien Van Gorp and I visited KBC to interview Walter Carels, head of the department Change & Communication within KBC Group ICT. Towards the end of the interview, we asked him whether he would be interested in having one or both of us for an internship in his team. From that very moment, he was very enthusiastic and he even started to wonder about the tasks we could perform. A few weeks later, we heard that there would be a place in his team for both of us. Of course, I was very pleased with my internship at KBC. I have always been very interested in a function in a communication team. To a large extent this is due to my interest in language and writing. Moreover, I have always been fascinated by communication; how people speak to each other, how they convey messages, how vital communication can be,...During my studies of Multilingual Business Communication, I have also learned that a company’s success can for a greater part be attributed to a clear and fluent communication. Looking back, I would say that I was even more surprised how much responsibility a communication team has within a company. Even in a business like ICT.

After six weeks, I left with a double feeling. One the hand, I was happy that everything had gone just right, that I had met a group of kind and interesting people and that I had been able to really mean something for this company. On the other, I was a bit sad to leave them and my unfinished projects behind.

I hope I will see them again.

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1 Dorien Van Gorp and I have written the first chapter of this dissertation together, as we did our internship at the same company and department.
Chapter 1: Presentation of company and department

1. History
The history of Group ICT started in 1998, when KBC was founded. Therefore, we will first present you a short history of KBC Group and then we will move on to the most important events in the history of Group ICT itself. The information we used for this section stems from internal documents and publications as well as an interview with Walter Carels, who is head of the department Change & Communication.

1.1. KBC Group
In 2005 KBC Group NV originated from the merger of KBC Bank & Insurances holding and Almanij. KBC Bank & Insurances holding itself was founded in 1998 when three Belgian financial institutions merged, namely Kredietbank, ABB insurances and CERA bank. The history of the company is characterized by a successful expansion in countries like Hungary, Slovakia, Poland and Czech Republic.

Europe is the main geographical focus of KBC Group where it serves private banking customers as well as small and middle large entreprises. KBC Group plays a leading role in his two home markets, Belgium and Eastern Europe, and develops an extensive private banking network on the pretext of European Private Bankers (Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom). With its turnover of approximately 24 billion euro, KBC Group is one of the largest Belgian companies and with its 11 million clients it is also one of the leading financial groups in Europe.

This year KBC celebrates its tenth anniversary. Therefore, we will give you a short overview of the most important events per year, starting with the foundation of KBC in 1998.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Kredietbank, CERA Bank and ABB Verzekeringen announce they are joining forces to form a ‘multi-channel bancassurer’: KBC Bank &amp; Insurance Group. KBC thus becomes the second largest bancassurer in Belgium and one of the largest financial institutions in Europe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Expansion starts in the second home market, Central-Europe, with investments in CSOB (Czech Republic and Slovakia) and in K&amp;H Life (Hungary).</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>The merger takes shape with the migration to a single computer platform in Belgium. At the same time, the millennium changeover is completed successfully. KBC becomes major shareholder in K&amp;H bank (Hungary). Antwerp Diamond Bank starts its international expansion. In the Czech Republic, CSOB acquires IPB, making it the market leader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Majority shareholding in Kredytbank (Poland).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Merger process completed: all Belgian bank branches on the same computer platform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Majority shareholding in WARTA Insurance (Poland). KBC Securities starts up in Poland and immediately becomes a top player in the market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Mergers as a result of the takeover of Almanij, with integration of KBL (Luxemburg): KBC Group NV. KBC Asset Management crosses the 100 billion euros threshold in funds under management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>With the Next project, KBC establishes its long-term strategy, and initiates a reorganisation whereby the Business Units, Belgium, Central Europe, Merchant Banking and European Private Banking, work together with Shared Services and Operations and Group Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Customer satisfaction in Belgium reaches an all-time high: 86% of insurance agent customers and 72% of bank branch customers say they are ‘satisfied’ to ‘highly satisfied’. Majority shareholding in Absolut Bank (Russia), DZI and EIB (Bulgaria), A Banka (Serbia), Romastal Leasing and INK Insurance Broker (Romania). KBC Securities makes acquisitions in several CEE countries.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2. Group ICT

KBC ICT originates from the ICT departments of the bank and insurance companies KB, CERA and ABB. Each of these parties had an own ICT department from the start. When the companies merged in 1998, all ICTers came together. However, five years ago Carl Tilkin-Franssen, former CIO (Chief Information Officer), decided to take the ICT department out of the totality. From then on, ICT was enabled to provide internal services.

In January 2006, the Group ICT programme was launched with the aim of forming a single European global service provider. From a Business point of view, this has meant in effect that internal ICT services’ customers from all bank and insurance companies belonging to KBC Group could source their ICT services requirements from Group ICT. Around that time, demand rose to provide services to external companies as well. Legally, however, Group ICT was only allowed to ask money for internal services. Consequently, the new legal entity ‘KBC Global Services NV’ was founded. From that moment onwards, Group ICT could provide services for internal as well as external clients.

That same year, KBC Group also amplified on its vision and strategy of the future. This future perspective is called the ‘Next Statement’. This Next Statement explains the different courses KBC Group wants to strike out internationally. Out of the Next Statement grew the Group ICT Statement, which zoomed in specifically on the future goals of Group ICT. It was decided that the different ICT departments of KBC Group (for example KBC Belgium, but also ČSOB in the Czech Republic, Warta and KB in Poland) should become one entity: Group ICT. The goal of this merger was to offer the clients a better service and to anticipate on their wishes more specifically. This structure supervises the Group, directs and controls it as if it were one company. Consequently, Group ICT still depends on KBC Group, but becomes a new distinct company, one European ICT service provider.

On 1 May 2007, Group ICT celebrated its first birthday. More than 3000 ICT staff in Belgium, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary received a document case supporting the new Group ICT logo.
2. Structure

As Group ICT is part of KBC Group, we believe it is useful to give some information about both entities. We will start by describing the structure of KBC Group and then narrow it down to Group ICT. When discussing Group ICT, we will also take a closer look at the team we worked in during our internship, namely ‘Change and Communication’.

2.1 Structure KBC Group

As we already mentioned in ‘history’, KBC Group originated out of a merger of three companies. This means that a difficult reorganisation was in order, management and employees had to fit in a whole new story. Now, 10 years later, KBC Group has a solid structure under André Bergen. He is assisted by the Board of Directors, several committees and the Executive Committee. In these committees, you can find the CEOs of the different departments (see next page).

KBC Group did not limit itself to Belgium only. When ICT became a booming market in the late 90s, KBC did not have enough employees to do everything alone. Above that, it was also difficult to find external people who had the right qualifications. Therefore, they decided to outsource the ICT applications to India. Especially in 2003 en 2004, the cooperation with ValueSource in India became of a very high and mature level. In June 2004, ValueSource became a 100% subsidiary of KBC Group.

This was, however, not enough. In 2006, KBC launched the ‘NEXT’ project, which means that they wanted to create a second home market, namely Central-Europe. Due to this strategic change, organisational changes were also necessary. There was need for a structure that oversees, steers and controls the Group as if it were a single company. The challenges were to be situated in three different fields:

- Many companies
- Various métiers
- Numerous markets

The biggest challenge was (and still is) to bring all these aspects together in one unity.
Due to all those mergers and changes, it might be useful to give an idea of how big KBC Group actually is. Therefore, we give you the following facts and figures:

- The headquarters of KBC Group are situated in Brussels
- There are more or less 57 000 people working for KBC Group
  - ca 19 000 in Belgium
  - ca 32 000 in Central-Europe
  - ca 6 000 in the rest of the world
- The total amount of customers is estimated around 13 000 000
  - ca 3 800 000 in Belgium
  - ca 8 200 000 in Central-Europe
  - ca 800 000 in rest of the world

2.2 Structure of Group ICT

As one of our assignments was to create a new Global Navigator, i.e. a functional document which shows the entire structure of Group ICT, we will not go into detail as far as the build-up of the department is concerned. We only present here the general structure of Group ICT, giving an idea of the different departments that can be distinguished. We think it is more useful to see the rest of the structure in relationship to our internship and in this way also avoid useless overlaps.

Instead, we will give some information about the geographical spread, the employees of Group ICT and the budget. We would also like to take a look at the structure of the team we were part of during six weeks, that of Change and Communication.
At this moment, Group ICT exists more or less 2,5 years and operates in Belgium, Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and India. Due to this geographical spread, cooperation is not always very easy. As this is a serious problem in Group ICT, we will further elaborate on this when discussing the SWOT analysis.

Group ICT is a global company as it employs 2000 ICT-specialists in Belgium en 1600 in the rest of the world.
As far as budget is concerned, we can see that it corresponds to the pie chart of the employees. This year, Group ICT has a budget of more than 800 million euros, almost 60 percent of which is taken up by Belgium.

![Budget Chart]

*Figure 5 Budget of Group ICT*

Other useful aspects, such as services and customers, will be discussed later under their respective headings.

### 2.3 Change & communication

To conclude, we would like to give a general idea of how the Change and Communication team is built up and what they do exactly.

The main goal of ICT’s own communication team is to provide smooth and professional communication about and for KBC ICT. The mission of ICT Change & Communication is to communicate management goals and directions and to create and maintain a positive image of ICT. To achieve this, the communication team focuses on offering a balanced mix of communication media: ICT Events, ICT Publications, Intranet, News and Datasharing. Via a clear change method, the team gives guidance in the most efficient ways to reach the envisaged change.
The team consists out of the following members:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Walter Carels</strong></td>
<td>Change and Communication Manager/Department head ICT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belgium</strong></td>
<td><strong>Carla Cardoen</strong> Project coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Veerle De Mil</strong></td>
<td>Process manager and local contact for Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>An Druyts</strong></td>
<td>Project leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lut Meert</strong></td>
<td>Project assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cheryl Miller</strong></td>
<td>Change expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Johan Praet</strong></td>
<td>Project leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patrick Van Oudenhove</strong></td>
<td>Editor-in-chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CE</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mariann Falusi</strong> Project coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local contact point in Hungary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eva Kubícková</strong></td>
<td>Project coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local contact point in Czech Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Irena Zakrzewska</strong></td>
<td>Project coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local contact point in Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Malgorzata Kurcewicz</strong></td>
<td>Consultant internal communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Corporate identity

3.1 Mission Statement

*KBC ICT aims to be the partner of all lines of business within the KBC Group. ICT offers these internal clients best in class services for the full value chain so that they can run their business processes smoothly. In that way, ICT contributes to qualitative improvements in the overall functioning of the KBC Group.*

3.1 Values

The values of Group ICT are based on four main principles, namely International, Professional, Respectful and Open. These values are considered to be of paramount importance within the company. Daily, every employee is reminded that Group ICT is ‘IPRO’. When Group ICT celebrated its first birthday, every single employee received a kind of birthday card which featured the Group ICT logo and the four different values.

Most people have the card on their desk, so that they are confronted with the values every day. On top of this, the company magazine, ICTaLIVE, is currently devoting four editions to these values. In the first edition\(^2\), the editors try to find out whether their managers really are as ‘open’ as they claim to be. They tend to do this in a playful way e.g. by including a comic.

In what follows we will first describe the values as they have been described within the company. We will then evaluate them based on our experiences during our internship and compare them with how Walter Carels, head of the department Change & Communication, experiences the values of Group ICT (interview 22/05/2008).

3.1.1 International

- ICT goes beyond national borders
- We use our cultural diversity as a strength
- We strike the right balance between global and local requirements

\(^2\) As the edition is not yet available, we are not able to include an example.
3.1.2 Professional
- ICT is a trustworthy partner
- We bring professional know-how
- We pave the way for our customers
- We want to be the best while applying the best practices

3.1.3 Respectful
- People are our most important asset
- We aim at working in trust and full cooperation
- We respect all cultures

3.1.4 Open
- ICT stimulates open communication
- We are transparent in our working methods
- We communicate the management goals and directions

3.1.5 Evaluation
According to Walter Carels the values of Group ICT are very intriguing. Today they seem to be self-evident, but actually they are not. Therefore there is a need to remind people of them every single day and defend the values so that everyone takes them into account. It is true that when reading the values on the card or posters, you assume them to be obvious. But it is not that simple. Being international, open, respectful, and professional at the same time is not easy. As Walter Carels declares, the difficulty lies in the international aspect of the company. When you set the values in a Belgian context, they seem fairly easy to follow. When you add Central-Europe and India, however, the context changes as we then have to deal with different cultures and customs. But this is the reality of Group ICT: it is not a Belgian cocoon, but a diverse company.

In the case of the value ‘International’, the difficulty lies in the behaviour of the people. Of course, every employee knows that Group ICT is a ‘global’ company and that several countries are involved. But not everyone is affected with this concern at the same level. According to Walter Carels, the employees of Value Source (India) feel much more international than the average Belgian employee. Only a few people have to travel
regularly and need to keep in contact with India or Central-Europe. However, it is important that everyone makes an ‘international click’ because at the moment some people make little effort to be ‘international’. A good example of this lack is the company’s restaurant. When our Central-European colleagues are visiting Belgium, all dishes have to be translated in English because there is no English menu available. When Walter Carels recommended providing English menus, there was no reaction at all. As we were working in a global team and had contact with Central-European colleagues from day one, it is difficult to judge the overall behaviour. It is clear, though, that the Change & Communication team is making great efforts to be ‘international’ and to include all countries in the everyday workings of the company.

As for the value ‘open’, Walter Carels claims it to be a value that is very Belgian. Within Group ICT Belgium a fine and open communication strategy dominates. This is not really the case in Central-Europe, where everything is still regulated very hierarchically. There is not much room for open communication as the heads still keep a lot of information for themselves while employees do not dare to tell or ask their bosses everything. This hierarchical structure has a great impact on the efficiency of communication. We agree that ‘openness’ can more or less be seen as rule in Belgium. Everyone is very friendly, and we could ask no matter what to no matter whom. Even the department heads were very willing to help us when we had a certain problem.

As for communication and top-down information, we can say that everybody shares his or her information as much as possible. When something new was decided, we were informed almost immediately. We should, once again, take into account that our internship took place at the department Change & Communication and that this way of working might be typical for a communication team.

With ‘respectful’ Group ICT does not only mean that employees should be respectful to their boss or to the persons next to them. It is needed to see this value in a broader, international context. Walter Carels says that the most important aspect of being ‘respectful’ is to learn appreciating other cultures. Working together with different countries means adapting to each other’s language, habits and customs. Most of the time, we are talking about small practical things but we feel this is a very sensitive point
within Group ICT. In the Czech Republic, for example, women feel very offended when a man steps into the elevator first. In Belgium, women will generally not even notice this. It is important, though, to take into account these habits because it helps to understand people’s reactions. We too had to adapt to the Central-European colleagues when they came over to Belgium. One lady seemed to be very ignorant and not friendly at all. At first we were a bit offended, but later we found out that it was not a habit to be open to strangers and meet them cordially.

According to Walter Carels, the value ‘professional’ is the best one as every ICTer believes himself to be rather professional. Nevertheless, working somewhere else in a professional way is not that evident. This can be considered as a change, and therefore a mental click is needed. Looking through non-ICT glasses, we trust Group ICT to be professional as it is a company of more or less 3.500 employees who work together to offer ICT services to KBC Group.

It is clear that these values were not created overnight. They have been well-considered and actually are strategic missions everyone should take into account. We can conclude that the main difficulty for Group ICT is its internationality because this entails that several differences (language, customs, way of working etc.) need to be aligned. The only way to make sure that everyone understands the values and lives by them is by drawing the attention to them and by repeating them. “Repeat, repeat, repeat,” dixit Walter Carels.
4. Products

Group ICT mainly produces services for their internal business. However, these services can also be provided externally. Actually, this means that they produce the internal services for a broader group of clientele. The main drive is to create volume, i.e. computer space, programmes,..., at a low cost. They want to achieve a larger economy of scale, which applies both to knowledge and infrastructure. An example of this is that it is more profitable to produce 50,000 computers, than to produce 5 of them as the knowledge that is needed remains the same. In other words, providing external services is a way of making profit for Group ICT.

Another advantage is that Group ICT can survive as an autonomous entity in the long run. If Group ICT would ever become an autonomous company they have to make sure that their economy of scale is large enough. To enter the external market, however, Group ICT had to organise itself as a professional commercial organisation. This included offering their services at prices that are conform to the market. Actually, Group ICT was already delivering its services to the ‘small companies’ within KBC Group (e.g. KBC Finance or KBC Lease) before it was released on the external market. The only difference now is that the company has to deal with several opponents at the market (see also 6. Opponents).

Group ICT offers a wide range of services like computer systems, data management and other infrastructure as well as maintenance. It has to be noted, though, that the company is only creating software for its own sake. The reason for this is two-folded. On the one hand, they want to keep the internal software inside the company. On the other, it is very difficult to create similar software for other companies as the demands for the software differ extremely. A company that produces e.g. toys has other expectations of software than a financial institution does. Moreover, creating software for external use is not necessary as this is not creating a larger economy of scale and is consequently not profitable.
5. Clients

KBC Global Services NV is a separate PLC within the Group and can give invoices internally as well as externally. We can distinguish three types of clients: internal, external and partnerships.

5.1 Internal clients

ICT has always been internal and the intention is to keep the ICT company within KBC and make it stronger by offering and invoicing services to others. The decision is made, however, to limit insourcing to a maximum of 30 percent. In this way, KBC Group stays the ‘preferred client’ and thus can expect the first service.

5.2 External clients

Due to privacy policies, we cannot give names of external companies that request services of Group ICT. In general, they offer services to all kinds of companies from different sectors. Obviously, a selection is made so that only the most interesting companies can profit from the services of Group ICT. The target group is restricted to middle-large enterprises as their scale has just the right size to include. Enterprises that are too small, bring too much costs with them compared to the services that Group ICT can provide. Companies that are too big, however, are not suitable as well since they require a lot of organisation.

Apart from the size of the company, quality is also taken into account. When providing services for the internal client, KBC Group, Group ICT tries to achieve a certain level of quality that is necessary for optimal efficiency within KBC Group. Consequently, Group ICT is not able to provide services neither for e.g. the NAVO nor for e.g. a small candy shop because this would diverge too much from the standard.

In general, external clients are contacted by two ‘bid managers’, who represent the eyes and ears of Group ICT. They look around and try to find requests for information or requests for proposal and provide an answer for them. This is called the ‘natural network’. However, these people are not commercial sales representatives. Most of the time, clients are proposed by the external partners of Group ICT (see also 5.2 Partners).
which do have sales representatives. Anyhow, KBC has decided neither to invest extensively in distribution nor in marketing.

A distinction has to be made, however, between the amount of money that clients have to pay for the same services. Within the company, there is the cost price plus a small percentage to the price per unit. Externally, on the other hand, that price is in compliance with market prices and also depends on the consumer and the offer.

5.2 Partners

Apart from external clients, Group ICT also has strategic partnerships to fulfil the needs of certain customers. The most important partner is BASF IT Services with which they have an agreement to cooperate and provide a number of services to companies in the Benelux. BASF is specialized in SAP. Another partner of Group ICT is BT, British Telecom. Together the companies try to create a solution for ICT-outsourcing of companies in different sectors. BT has the capacity to design and implement the necessary network infrastructures and can offer services concerning security, mobility and CRM (Customer Relationship Management). Recently, HP joined Group ICT as a partner.

6. Opponents

Group ICT has few opponents as the company specifically provides services for KBC Group and has very few external clients. The aim is to cooperate with external companies that offer their services on the external market. Few companies are able to provide the demanded services. On the ICT market, cooperation between companies is very common. Complementary companies try to offer their services together so that they are capable of offering a wider range of services to a certain client. This poses advantages both for the client as well as for the companies involved. The client on the hand, can make sure that all the demanded services will be provided while there is only one contact point. The companies in question, on the other, can accept the commission and combine their strengths. In practice this means that a client offers a commission to several ICT companies. To meet the requirements, companies have to cooperate. This results in the fact that it is possible to cooperate with one company today and be its opponent tomorrow.
7. Specific company data

In this part we will elaborate on the general strategies that Group ICT has been following and will continue in the future. All the information we present here originates from internal presentations and an interview with the head of the Change & Communication department, Walter Carels.

7.1 Context

In 2005, the Executive Committee of KBC Group announced a number of strategic and organisational changes that were intended to change the direction of KBC Group; especially regarding its approach and steering of the second home market of KBC, Central Europe. The codename for this strategy update was called: “NEXT”. Early 2006, a new organisation structure for KBC Group was announced. The new strategy for operations was to enable the support of KBC’s global business by leveraging group synergies, focusing on scale advantage and centralisation of competence with consistent local delivery.

The first organisation within Operations to “Go Global” was ICT. The reasoning behind this decision was clearly due to the high level of costs and investments required to support ICT across the Group. Additionally, a harmonized ICT was a precondition to enable the support of global business departments.

In January 2006, “Group ICT” was launched and all the ICT departments within KBC Group, including both Bank & Insurance companies, took the first step towards merging into one Global European ICT Service Provider.

7.2 Group ICT Mission Statement & vision

The mission of Group ICT had its roots within the existing KBC ICT department and sounds as follows:

“Group ICT wants to be the partner of all lines of business of the KBC Group by offering them best in class ICT services for the full value chain enabling them to run their business processes smoothly and resulting in the highest possible benefit for KBC Group.”
The mission statement tells much about the way Group ICT wants to perform and provide its services to the various Business lines of KBC Group. Partnership is one of the most important principles of Group ICT. It is built by fostering long-term business relationships with the customers and refers to the position of ICT towards the Business and vice versa. It is not a hard commercial relationship but ICT is the preferred provider of the Business that addresses ICT as its sole contactor. Insourcing is a ‘complementary strategy’ for Group ICT as it allows the organization to grow and increase volumes on the one hand, while decreasing cost for KBC on the other. Therefore, it has been agreed that Group ICT will not become an independent ICT company in the future.

7.3 From mono to multi

By becoming a Global European ICT service provider, Group ICT enables Global support of KBC’s Global Business Strategy. In the mission statement, Group ICT promises to deliver the highest possible benefit for KBC Group. This implies that the overall orientation of Group ICT’s mission, is on a Group level and this requires a shift in thinking from ‘local’ to ‘group’. Therefore the vision of Group ICT is making a shift from ‘mono’ to ‘multi’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ICT was...</th>
<th>ICT will be...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Focused on one customer</td>
<td>• Build once deploy multi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Close to the customer</td>
<td>• Built more generic, and copy-paste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• maximal use of resources</td>
<td>• Manage a customer’s portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aimed at optimising the total ICT portfolio</td>
<td>• Work out a complete service model to obtain standardised</td>
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<td>• Vision on (relative) short-term with smaller delta’s</td>
<td>services</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Focused on one customer</td>
<td>• Invest more proactive</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Close to the customer</td>
<td>• Be more commercial and sell</td>
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<tr>
<td>• maximal use of resources</td>
<td>• Make bigger investments</td>
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Figure 6 Group ICT strategy

The concept of Mono-to-Multi allows Group ICT to do more with less, by doing things once, then replicating them many times throughout the Group. By delivering multi, the true benefits of Group scale can be leveraged and larger investments across the Group can be made.

7.4 BINGO

The ICT organisation is growing and becoming more international, which has resulted in more customers, new languages and greater geographical distribution. In April 2007, the financial objective of remaining within budget, and a desire to create synergy and
increase quality levels led to BINGO, a study of how ICT services can be provided in an international way. To understand what BINGO entails, it is necessary to first describe what ICT services, Service Centers and Delivery Centers are. ‘Services’ have been defined as all ‘ICT’ assets that contain value for the customer. Often, these are repeated services that are designed independently of the customer and provided to them via the Group ICT network of delivery centres. Within Group ICT, the image of a standard kitchen cabinet is used to explain what a service can be.

Service Centers are essentially teams of specialists, who develop, manage and implement re-usable, standardised ICT services. Service Centers work with the delivery organisations, not with the end customer. Delivery Centers provide ICT solutions for one customer based on the needs of that customer and manages the competence how to use these services. This entity makes contact with the customers – local bank, local insurance, local third party – and talks with them to find the best solution. Delivery Centers also trigger the Service Center to create new repeatable services.

Big international ICT companies usually deliver their services out of a very monopolistic situation. They have head offices that dictate all laws and also take care of the delivery. There are some satellites, but they are purely executing. BINGO is rather innovative and unique at the ICT market because it works with service delivery. The goal is to use as many reusable components as possible to come to a solution. Carl Tilkin-Franssen wants to organize the entire ICT company based on this BINGO model. Service centres are located all over the world and are working for the delivery centres in the different countries. By doing this, Group ICT can provide services to multiple clients at once. Working with service centres enables parallel delivery and speeds up delivery.
8. Swot analysis

Relying on the information we provided in this chapter, we will now move on to the SWOT analysis of Group ICT. We will first discuss some strengths and weaknesses and then conclude with several opportunities and threats.

8.1 Strengths

Sole provider of KBC Group

As Group ICT has the security that it can sell at least 70% of its services to KBC Group, the company need not fear a lack of clients, nor the competition with opponents. This is an important strength compared to most other companies. However, it is a fact that Group ICT is greatly influenced by the prosperity of KBC Group.

Cultural diversity

Due to its internationality, Group ICT can profit from great cultural diversity. By cooperating with several nationalities, people learn to be more aware of other cultures and their customs. We believe this certainly is an added value for a company as employees get the possibility to get acquainted with other cultures and are in a certain way obliged to be more ‘open’ towards them.

Reliable partners

Group ICT cooperates with two other ICT companies, namely BASF and BT. Working together with these companies enables Group ICT to take a stronger position on the ICT market while diminishing the risk that comes with it. Cooperating with other companies is profitable since you can then also become acquainted with other technologies.

Values

As we already mentioned, Group ICT has four values that act as cornerstones of the organisation. Within the company, much attention is paid to bringing them into practice. If everyone is willing to live by these values, this is a great strength for Group ICT as an organisation. It is the key to a successful cooperation that is based on respect, open communication and internationality. Evidently, being professional is a fundamental requirement in the business world.
**ValueSource**

ValueSource is a company that is part of Group ICT and is situated in India. It offers internal as well as external services. Since it is a dependent company, the cooperation is very close and strong. The tools they use to program and test are the same as the ones that are used in Belgium. However, until this moment, the cost for the infrastructure is considerably lower. Moreover, they are able to produce and maintain software for external companies.

**8.2 Weaknesses**

**Internationality**

The main weakness (and at the same time an opportunity) is the cooperation between Central-Europe and Belgium, the ‘being international’. This causes several problems:

- The distance between Belgium and the Central-European countries does not facilitate communication. Due to these distances, communication relies mostly on telephone, e-mail or video conference. To make fundamental decisions, more or less every month a cross-border meeting is organized at the Change and Communication department. We experienced that it is crucial to have these meetings, since it is useful to create a debate about topics that are essential in the everyday workings. However, this requires a lot of organization for all parties and this is not as evident as it seems.

- The difference in language is also a crucial issue within Group ICT. The problem is that nobody can express him- or herself in the mother language. Often this results in misunderstandings or confusion. Defending your vision in a discussion that is held in another language is not an optimal situation. When we are talking about fundamental decisions, this really is a big problem. In Poland, e.g. it is remarkable that even the management does not master the English language enough to understand everything that is told by their CIO.

- Belgium and the Central-European countries differ from one another as far as customs are concerned. As we already mentioned, in the Czech Republic, women feel can very offended when a man steps into the elevator first. In Belgium,
women will probably not even be aware of this. It is important, though, to take into account these customs because it can help us to understand why people react as they do in certain situations.

- Group ICT originates from various companies in Belgium and Central-Europe. At the start, it was not easy to set up a structure that covered all these companies. Presently, Group ICT has managed to become that Global European service provider. However, we feel that the mentalities of the different companies still can be felt in Group ICT. As these companies were serving different markets, unity had to be created there as well.

- Another weakness is the rate of retention. Employees in Central-Europe are not as loyal to their company as is the case in Belgium. People finding themselves at a certain level of the hierarchical ladder in Belgium, will normally stay until they are old enough to retire. In Central-Europe, on the other hand, employees hop and shop for just a few zlotys more. For a pay rise of a very small percentage, they just leave the bank.

**Competition**

Group ICT as an organisation is very much dependent on KBC Group. It has agreed to provide at least 70 percent of its services to KBC Group and always treat it as the most important client. Therefore, it is difficult to play a powerful opponent on the ICT market, compared to companies as e.g. IBM. As Group ICT is restricted by the standard quality of KBC Group, it cannot provide services to a wide range of companies. Consequently, Group ICT cannot accept all orders that they receive. However, it should be noted that this is negligible compared to the security that KBC Group as main client can offer.

**8.3 Opportunities**

**New markets**

KBC Group is still expanding today and is negotiating with financial institutions in e.g. Romania, Russia and Serbia. Acquiring new companies for KBC Group means new ICT
divisions for Group ICT. This results in larger space, lower cost and new clients on the international market.

**BINGO**

One of the most important opportunities for Group ICT is the separation of service and delivery centres. By separating these entities, Group ICT can deliver internationally and to multiple clients at the same time. This type of delivery is rather unique on the ICT market. The structuring of the organization in this way is thus an opportunity that can make Group ICT stronger. Moreover, the service centres try to use and reuse things that are already made. Consequently they can gain time and make profit. However, this is a mental change for all ICTers. People working in the service centres, on the one hand, have to learn to make things that can also be used by others. People working in the delivery centre, on the other, have to learn to use things made by others. An ICTer always likes to reinvent things himself, and this has to change. In Group ICT, they call this a ‘paradigm shift’.

**8.4 Threats**

Due to the internationality and the expansion that is going on today within Group ICT, there is a danger that control will be lost. It will be difficult to align all companies with each of them having their own customs, language and rules. As becomes clear from the weaknesses we pointed out, Group ICT is experiencing a lot of trouble already managing six countries and uniting all different opinions and structures. Expansion would cause more diversity (which is a strength) but at the same time bring along new problems.
Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

1. Introduction

As one of the main tasks during my internship was the re-branding of Group ICT, I have opted to elaborate on the literary theory regarding re-branding. However, I have chosen to start this study from a rather psychological point of view because this places the ‘brand’ in less common perspective. Most studies that deal with branding or re-branding start by introducing concepts as brand equity, visual identity or brand value. The approach that I have chosen regards a brand not as a visual sign but as a mental concept which creates a range of associations in the mind of the consumer. Consequently, it becomes clear that re-branding is more than just changing your name overnight.

In the first part of this literary overview, I focus on the mental processes that branding involves. In the second part I discuss the motivations for re-branding as well as a new theoretical framework for radical brand evolution and the practical side of changing a company’s brand.
2. Brands and mental processes

The American Marketing Association defines a brand as ‘a name, term, sign, symbol or design or a combination of those, which identifies the products or services of a certain group and distinguishes them from others’ (Kotler, 2007). This definition shows that brands identify the source of a product or service and makes sure that people can attach a certain value to that product or service. Consequently, branding can be defined as the attribution of a brand to certain products or services.

To transform a product into a brand, a company needs to show the (potential) customers not only ‘who’ the product is – by giving it a name and using characteristics that identify the product – but also ‘what’ it does and ‘why’ it can be useful for these customers. Branding creates mental structures in the minds of the customers and consequently the customers can order their knowledge about products and services so that they can easily make decisions concerning their purchases. When a company succeeds in creating a strong brand and company image and can influence the customers’ behaviour, this certainly adds value to the company (Kotler, 2007).

Thus, it is clear that a brand is more than just a symbol or a name. Internally as well as externally, people have certain feelings about brands. Positive feelings can create added value to the workings of a company. Consequently, a strong and recognizable brand and company image is of utmost importance.

To understand how branding works, it is necessary to understand the mental processes that are triggered in the minds of the human beings that are confronted with these brands. In other words, we need to take a closer look at the processes behind consumer behaviour and the way in which brands ‘communicate’ with consumers.

2.1 Rational models of brand communication

Since the beginning of the previous century, several models dealing with brand communication or brand processing have been developed. One of these models is the
AIDA-model which was created by Strong in 1925. It was the first model that split up the processing of brands\(^3\) in different successive information processing stages (Vyncke, 2007). According to this model, a brand is sending rational messages to the consumer which he or she interprets and acts upon (Barnham, 2007). The consumer is guided through four different stages to make him or her ‘buy’ the product.

![AIDA-model](image)

Figure 7 AIDA-model

Based on the AIDA-model, several other models were developed. There are three so-called ‘classic’ models: the Classic Learning Hierarchy, the Low Involvement Model and the Cognitive Dissonance Model. These three models share the belief that three instead of four stages can be distinguished in brand communication. However, each model places these stages in a different sequence.

The first model was developed by Lavidge and Steiner in 1961. It was based on the principle of the classic learning hierarchy which assumes that three different stages can be found in brand processing: a cognitive stage in which the consumer learns about the existence of a brand and its name (brand awareness and knowledge), an affective stage in which the consumer develops a certain attitude towards the brand (brand attitude) and a conative stage in which the consumer decides on his behaviour towards the brand (buying behaviour). This model defends the idea that there is learn – like - do sequel in brand processing.

The second classic model, the Low Involvement Model, can be used in a slightly different context. Its creator, Krugman, insisted upon the fact that consumers were more involved

\(^3\)In the literature concerning this topic, ad processing and brand processing are used both. However, given the subject of this literature study is ‘branding’, brand processing will be used here.
with some products than with other. When buying e.g. washing powder, a consumer barely develops an attitude towards the brand of that product. It is enough for him to know the name of the brand. Therefore, Krugman states that in the case of low involvement products, the consumer follows a learn – do - like sequel. He learns the brand name or logo, then goes on to buy the product and finally decides whether he likes it or not.

In contrast, the Cognitive Dissonance Model can be applied to high involvement products. Researchers have noticed that in the case of high involvement products, like e.g. cars, consumers tend to be confused by the qualities all the possible brands have to offer. Consequently, they often buy these products relying on their gut feeling. It is only after they have bought the product and used it, that they decide whether they like it and that they turn to manuals, advertisements to learn more about the brand. In this case the order of information processing is rather do – like – learn (Vyncke, 2007).

![Figure 8 The three classic models](image)

However, all these models describe only one route information processing and persuasion. This kind of approach has now been widely rejected as a way of understanding how brands influence consumer behaviour. Brand communication seems
to be more complicated than was thought originally, as not only rational messages but emotional values as well, are of great importance (Barnham, 2007).

The first model that included emotions in brand processing was the *Elaboration Likelihood Model* by Petty and Cacioppo. Based on the experiments of Gerald J. Gorn⁴, they ‘came up with a convincing two-route model of persuasion, in which consumers processed advertising along either a central or peripheral persuasive route depending on both their motivation and capacity to elaborate on the content of an advertisement’ (Vyncke, 2007 p.27).

The chance (likelihood) that a target audience will elaborate on a certain advertisement (brand) is set by the characteristics of the audience⁵, the characteristics of the specific situation in which the audience is confronted with the advertisement and the characteristics of the advertisement itself. Petty and Cacioppo decided to label these determining factors as the ‘motivation’ of the audience to process the content of the advertisement and as the ‘capacity’ of the audience to process the content of an advertisement. To be persuaded, it is required that consumers possess both the motivation and capacity to elaborate on the ad before the central persuasive route is taken. However, if one of them or both are missing, the consumer brand preferences can still be influenced by using a peripheral persuasive route. This means that the likeability to elaborate on the ad is created by the peripheral ‘cues’ of the ad (e.g. music, colours, celebrities,...).

To sum up, the Elaboration Likelihood Model states that instead of one there are two persuasive routes: a rational route that provides the consumer with relevant product information and a more emotional route that tries to convince the consumer with formal ‘cues’.

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⁴ ‘The experiments of Gorn revealed the importance of form (or background features, and especially Music as a formal ‘cue’) of an advertisement as an important product preference influencing factor, and thus as a significant communicative dimension [...] in and on itself’ (Vyncke, 2007 p.27).

⁵ ‘E.g. their involvement with the product category or the specific brand’ (Vyncke, 2007 p.28).
During the last decades of the previous century, another model has been established. According to Van Raaij, who based his model on psychological evidence, there were not two separated routes, but two intertwined routes. In what follows, this model, which is called the Scanning/Focusing Model, will be explained in more detail. However, to understand the insights of Van Raaij we first need to turn to the general information processing mechanisms of the human brain.

2.2 Affective and cognitive reactions

The human mind consists out of number of different structures that each engage in specific functions and that communicate and cooperate with each other. MacLean presents the brain as a triune – hence the Triune Brain Theory. Each part represents a different evolutionary phase and has its own function (Franzen & Bouwman, 1999). In other words, these three hierarchical layers have evolved in response to the human’s evolutionary needs. The oldest part of the brain or the reptilian system (R-complex) is responsible for very basic functions and physical survival. The limbic system (paleomammalian system) is situated on top of the R-complex and regulates the primary centres of emotion. It is therefore also known as the emotional brain. The neocortex layer is located at the outer part of the brain and is responsible for rational thinking (Vyncke, 2007). To put it briefly, the three systems can respectively be linked to instinct, emotion and reason (Franzen & Bouwman, 1999).

It is clear that cognitive and affective processes occur at different parts of the brain. However, these parts cooperate closely: emotions enhance the reasoning and the cognitive brain evaluates and refines the consequences of emotions. It should rather be seen as an intertwined route, than as two separate routes (Franzen & Bouwman, 1999).

According to LeDoux, there are two pathways through which information is processed in the brain. External stimuli first pass through the thalamus (which is a part of the limbic
system) and then reach the amygdala (which plays a central role in evaluating the emotional significance of the stimuli). This is called the low road. When the information goes from the thalamus to the sensory cortex (which is a part of the neocortex) before arriving in the amygdale, the high road has processed the information. LeDoux calls the low road a ‘quick and dirty’ processing pathway since it can provide quick but not very accurate emotional responses. The high road, though, is slower but more careful. It seems as if the high road were a kind of correction to the low road (Vyncke, 2007).

2.3 Scanning/focussing

Based on the Elaboration Likelihood Model and the insights of LeDoux, Van Raaij developed an alternative brand processing model. This Scanning/Focusing Model makes use of two intertwined persuasive routes, instead of two separate ones. In agreement with LeDoux, Van Raaij labelled these routes in terms of affect and cognition.\(^6\)

If a consumer processes an ad, he will first go through a scanning stage in which he selects the information that attracts him. This can be compared to the low road of LeDoux. This first stage results in a kind of primary affective reaction.\(^7\) If the reaction is negative, the consumer will pay no more attention to the ad. If it is positive, the consumer will focus on the content of the ad. This is called the focusing stage and can be compared to LeDoux’ high road. Although the focusing stage is of a more cognitive nature, it results in the secondary affective reaction. Finally, this results in a behavioural intention and possibly in an actual (buying) behaviour. The tertiary affective reaction will evaluate the consumers’ behaviour (Vyncke, 2007). According to Vyncke (2007) the model of Van Raaij can be recognized as the most ‘state-of-the-art’ model on advertising and brand processing.

2.4 On desires, opinions and associations

Although it is now widely understood that emotional values are of great importance in advertising, we still need to dig deeper to understand how a brand can successfully

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\(^6\) In contrast with Petty and Ciacoppo who had labelled the central and peripheral routes in terms of content and form.

\(^7\) According to Zajonc (1980 in Vyncke, 2007) emotions are primary and precede cognition in the information processing chain.
communicate with consumers. Therefore, we need to take ‘a look at the planning of consumer behaviour as it unfolds in the head of the consumer’ (Vyncke, 2007 p.59).

According to Vyncke (2007), consumer behaviour – and human behaviour in general – is based on a number of desires (wants or needs) that this consumer needs or wants in his life. These desires account for states of having, doing or being that the consumer considers as being important to live a ‘happy’ life.

However, every consumer has different needs and wants. The reason for this is that desires result from opinions or beliefs a consumer holds for being true. Consequently, to create a product or a brand that is ‘desired’, a brand manager should try to influence the opinions his customers have about the brand. These opinions can be compared to the image a brand has to the outside world: ‘Thus, advertising and communication management boils down to image or opinion management (in order to manage corresponding desires and finally the corresponding behaviour)’ (Vyncke, 2007 p.67).

It has been agreed upon that the image and opinions humans have, are always based upon systems of opposition and association. Consequently, we can regard the system of beliefs or opinions surrounding a brand in terms of associations and oppositions (Vyncke, 2007). When people save a brand in their mind, they attach a range of meanings to it. For a brand owner it is important to know which associations and oppositions his brand summons among the consumers.

Having access to this kind of information can be of great help when designing a brand strategy (Franzen and Bouwman, 1999). According to this way of thinking, a brand can be linked to several components. Each component represents a psychological reaction\(^8\) to the brand. The name of the brand – as well as the logo, colour and design – constitutes the centre of these reactions. Franzen and Bouwman (1999) distinguish between seven psychological reactions.

\(^8\) This contains all the associations, meanings, emotions and attitudes that the brand name invokes.
1. Brand knowledge: the consumer has stored the name of the brand as well as other characteristics of the brand in his mind.

2. Brand meaning: the brand name has been linked to several meanings in the consumer’s mind.

3. Brand emotion: the brand name is connected to a set of emotions that differ in nature as well as intensity.

4. Brand positioning: the brand has been positioned among other brands based on several common characteristics. At the same time it is removed from other groups of brands that have different characteristics.

5. Brand attitude: the brand is evaluated based on its positive and negative characteristics and the consequences the brand has on the behaviour of the consumer.

6. Brand intentional behaviour: the intention to buy a brand time and again.

7. Brand relation: the mutual relation between the brand and the consumer that exists out of interaction, communication, reciprocity and continuity.

All these psychological brand reactions are closely related to each other. Brand attitude, for example, is strongly influenced by brand emotion en brand meaning. Research has proven that the users of certain brand have established a wider association network than the non-users (Franzen and Bouwman, 1999)

We can conclude that the classic models of brand communication or processing cannot grasp the mental processes that are established in the consumer’s mind. The consumer is not merely an information processor, but a complex human being that ties emotions, needs and wants to the brand and image of a company. It is not just the logo or name of a brand that triggers behaviour. The brand is connected with a wide range of positive and negative associations that build up the opinion a consumer has about a certain brand and the image of the company. As opinions result in desires and behaviour, it is very important to establish positive brand opinions in the mind of the consumer. As a result, companies should take care of their brands and the associations that they entail.
However, careful branding is sometimes not enough. In time, brands can evolve and change radically. Bearing in mind that a brand is more than a name and a sign, it is obvious that this change cannot happen without reflection. Like branding, re-branding is a process that will lead to changes in the mind of the consumer. Therefore, changing a company’s brand – although seen as a necessary component of a successful marketing strategy – must be done cautiously. The next paragraph deals with the importance and motivations of re-branding and discusses the main issues in relation to the re-branding of the name, logo and slogan.
3. Brands and change

3.1 Need for re-branding

According to Merrilees (2005), all brands need to be changed on a regular basis so that they can be kept ‘fresh, vital, and relevant’ to the contemporary market. Stuart and Muzellec (2004) as well, state that companies might have good reasons to change their image. Although it has been widely assumed that building and maintaining strong brands is the key to success, re-branding is necessary. Merrilees (2005) proposes to talk about brand evolution in general as brands are actually continuously evolving. Sometimes, a brand changes radically. In those cases a radical brand evolution is going on.

Stuart and Muzellec (2004) too, distinguish between revolutionary and evolutionary change as the two ends of the same continuum. Whereas revolutionary change or radical brand evolution incorporates a change of name, logo and slogan, evolutionary change or brand evolution only involves a change of logo or slogan. I will use the concepts of radical brand evolution and brand evolution to denote these two ends.

3.2 Motivations for re-branding

Apart from being a necessity, most of the time companies have a clear motivation to re-brand. Overall, a company wants to signal that something has changed about its organisation. However, according to Stuart and Muzellec (2004), specific motivations can be categorized based on the circumstances that caused the re-branding.

The first reason to change a company’s brand can be a merger or acquisition. In those cases, the old brand carries the identity of companies that no longer exist. Therefore, keeping the old brand would seem unlikely for the customers. Shifts in the market or economic and legal changes can create the need to re-brand as well. Furthermore, it is possible that a brand has become outdated. If a brand is incapable to attract new customers or is associated with outmoded views, it needs a change to stay successful. Moreover, in our ever-changing society, ‘not trendy’ might be enough to choose another course.
Another important reason to radically change a brand is a new focus or vision for the company. Finally, creating a new socially responsible image and thereby leaving behind old social and moral baggage can be a motivation to take on another identity.

### 3.3 Frameworks for brand evolution

So, although re-branding is a strategy of such a great importance, little literature is provided on the topic. Consequently, there are no specific principles or theories available to manage the different types of brand evolution. According to Merrilees (2005), only three paradigms to brand evolution have been developed yet.

According to Merrilees (2005), one source of knowledge about radical brand evolution is case studies. However, not a single case has used its material to formulate a general framework for brand evolution. Although most academic literature points to the importance and urgent need for brands to evolve, no frameworks are provided.

However, Goodyear proposes a six-stage model of brand evolution in one of his studies. Goodyear’s evolution starts with unbranded goods that evolve to ‘brand as reference’, ‘brand as personality’, ‘brand as icon’, ‘brand as company’ and finally to ‘brand as policy’. A brand can enter the process at different stages and it is even possible that it does not reach the last stage.

Another framework for brand evolution is that of Park, Jaworski and MacInnis. They assume that a company chooses an initial branding position (functional or symbolic) for its brand. This position is maintained over the brand’s lifecycle. So in contrast with the model of Goodyear, brands do not shift from one stage to another. Nonetheless, Merrilees notes that ‘the “supply” side – that is, the role of management in designing and implementing the new brand strategy – is not as well developed as the demand side (consumer) aspects (Merrilees, 2005 p.202).

Recently, though, academic literature has focused on brand orientation, i.e. the centrality of the brand within marketing strategy. Choosing a brand orientated approach means

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9 This entire paragraph is based upon Merrilees (2005).
that everything in the company works in function of the development and protection of the brand identity. The related concept of masterbrand or brand commitment regards the company brand as a force that has impact on all the stakeholders of the company. Merrilees adds two other concepts to the construct of brand orientation: brand vision and brand implementation. "Brand vision is the (re)-formulation of a brand, highlighting distinctive features and values and how the brand is positioned competitively. Brand strategy implementation is the implementation of the brand strategy through the marketing mix, including advertising (Merrilees, 2005 p.203).

Together, these three concepts provide a new framework that includes the demand as well as the supply side of branding. Brand vision makes sure that a new market position is taken based on research. Brand orientation sees to the fact that all stakeholders within the company support the new position. Brand strategy implementation launches the new brand and maintains the internal support.

With the help of a case study, Merrilees proves the importance of his new conceptual model. The three components provide a practical tool for companies to re-brand as they focus on different, yet necessary aspects that lead to a successful re-branding.

3.4 Types of brand evolution.
Whereas Merrilees (2005) focuses on the creation of a new theoretical model, Stuart and Muzellec (2004) give an overview of the more practical side of brand evolution. As was mentioned, Stuart and Muzellec regard re-branding as a continuum between brand evolution and radical brand evolution. Apart from the mental changes that re-brandings invoke, the practical change can influence the name, logo or slogan of the brand. A change in one of these categories results in a mere brand evolution, while a simultaneous change of the three categories causes a radical brand evolution.

Change of brand name
Changing the name of a company or organisation is a rather risky strategy as the name reflects the corporate personality of the company. Internally as well, a name change
might cause negative reactions among the employees. They may have strong attachments to the old name so that it might be difficult for them to identify with another name.

*Change of brand logo*
A logo should always be related to the company in some way, be it in colour or in shape. Moreover, it is important for a company to find a logo that attracts the attention and breathes out power as well as a sense of experience, confidence and tradition. Besides, a logo should be highly recognisable for the customers. A change in brand name will almost always result in a change of logo as well. However, the same risks apply as people might find it difficult to identify with the new logo or fail to pick up the intended symbolism.

*Change of slogan*
A company should take care that a slogan does not undermine its values and identity. If a company chooses to follow a new strategy in the future, adapting a new slogan might be a wise decision. However, a company should see to the fact that a slogan which is too ‘clever’ or ‘modern’ does not ridicule the new way of working. When a new name is introduced, a new slogan might be a great help.

It is clear that the management has to take into account several possible risks that can occur when the name, logo, slogan or a combination of these three change. In some cases, a radical change is necessary. In other cases, keeping the old name, logo or slogan can be a more careful approach. However, as we already concluded that change is a necessity to survive on the market, a well-considered change might be very profitable.
4. Conclusion

This literary overview ensures that branding and re-branding are perhaps the most delicate and important aspects of a successful marketing strategy. A company should first take into account the impact a brand and identity have on the human consumers. As we have discussed, a human being acts upon his wants and needs that have been established by his opinions or beliefs. These opinions can be compared to the image a company has to the consumer. If a consumer believes that a company is e.g. producing material in a socially irresponsible way, his opinion about that company is not good. Consequently, he will have no desire to use the materials of that company so that he will not buy them. The fact that this particular consumer has such a negative opinion about the company in question is the result of a range of associations that have entered the mind of the consumer. This simple example shows that managing the identity and brand of a company is rather difficult but nonetheless important.

Establishing a brand with attached associations is one thing. Changing this brand is yet another important decision within the marketing strategy of a company. We have seen that change is a necessity, but clear motivations will make it easier for a company to decide which practical changes they will perform. Moreover, it is not necessary to choose a radical brand evolution as changing the slogan might change the e.g. outdated character of a brand as well. However, every step of the re-branding process needs to be done with care.
Chapter 3: The internship

1. Introduction

In November 2007, Dorien Van Gorp and I interviewed Walter Carels, head of the department Change & Communication within KBC Group ICT, in the light of an assignment on change. When the interview was over, we asked whether it would be possible to do an internship at Group ICT. From the very beginning, Walter was very enthusiastic and soon both internships were approved.

Around Spring, we returned to Group ICT to sign our contracts and discuss the tasks we would carry out during our internship. I told Walter that I was mostly interested in tasks in which I could combine my knowledge of language and the skills I acquired in MTB. We agreed to make an analysis of the most prominent communication channels of Group ICT: Annual Overview, Group ICT Net, ICTaLIVE and Global Navigator.

A few days before the start of our internship, we were invited to the cross-border meeting of the Group ICT Change and Communication Team in Antwerp. Due to the fact that the team has members from Belgium, Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland and (recently) India, an international meeting is set up in Belgium every two months. The is a fixed programme that takes up most important topics on the one hand, but there is also room for discussion about other problems.

On the first day of the cross-border, we just sat down and listened to the members of the team, explaining and talking about a range of subjects. After lunch, we went for a stroll in the city. For us, this was a great opportunity to get to know not only our international colleagues, but the Belgian colleagues as well.

On the second day of the meeting, we were split up in small working groups most of the time and this allowed me to express my opinion more freely. After the sessions, the group
decided to spend some time together and drink a glass on the successful meeting. At that moment, I already had the feeling I was accepted as one of the group.

After the cross-border meeting, we discussed our tasks with Walter for a second time. As the new topic of re-branding had come on the agenda, we thought it a good idea to assist him by working out the re-branding plan. Furthermore, we also decided to take on Global Navigator, as this document was causing a lot of problems and an objective and new approach was needed. Finally we would also analyse the company magazine, ICTaLIVE.
2. Project 1: Global Navigator

2.1 Background information

When we first visited the Change & Communication Team in March to discuss the planned tasks with Walter Carels, we were also informed about Global Navigator, a document that contains the hierarchical structures of Group ICT. It was clear that this document caused a lot of problems for several members of the team as it was difficult to determine a fixed approach. According to Carla Cardoen, who was responsible for Global Navigator at that time, the difficulties were caused by the (recent) global character of Group ICT.

Global Navigator originates from a Belgian publication, Wegwijs, which presents the Belgian structure of Group ICT. There had been very few troubles to draw up Wegwijs as the Belgian structure of Group ICT has always been very transparent and clear. However, structuring Global Navigator, which presents the global structure of Group ICT, was not as easy as that. When a merger takes place, it is difficult to decide on a new hierarchy and people who were once of high influence, are often obliged to take a step down. This also happened in the case of Group ICT. Moreover, Global departments were created. This means that several people who were in charge of their own department at first, were now supposed to work under the supervision of the head of the global department.

It is obvious that for the members of the Change & Communication Team this was a hard nut to crack as they were responsible to put these changes in an official document. On top of this, it was very difficult to keep the document up to date as a lot of changes were still going on.

Therefore, it was our task to critically analyse the presented organisation charts and propose a new approach to structure Global Navigator in a correct and user-friendly way.
2.2 Briefing

During the first day of the cross-border meeting in Antwerp, Global Navigator was one of the points on the agenda. Once more, it became clear that the problems with Global Navigator had not yet been solved and that several points of discussion had not been settled even within the Change & Communication Team. Everyone agreed that the document was insufficient as it still presented a mixture of global and local structures. The latest version\(^\text{10}\) (March 2008) had tried to solve this problem by approaching the structure from a country-oriented perspective and by presenting the organisation charts per country. In addition, a ‘G’ had been added to the so-called global divisions and departments. However, there was still uncertainty within the team about this approach.

Furthermore, the team doubted the presentation of the organisation charts. How could this document be structured in a functional, instead of a hierarchical way? More and more people were questioning the need, target group and medium (paper) of the document.

As I had been scheduled for another break-out session, it was not possible for me to attend the working group on Global Navigator during the cross-border meeting. I was told that the Change & Communication team needed a proposal about the future approach of Global Navigator to present at the next DOC ICT\(^\text{11}\) of May 15.

In practice, this meant that we had first had to come up with some new ideas and propose these to Walter Carels. Next, we had to make a proposal on the lay-out and the medium of Global Navigator. Finally, a PowerPoint presentation with our findings was needed before the 9\(^\text{th}\) of May to put forward on the DOC ICT.

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\(^{10}\) See appendix 1.

\(^{11}\) DOC ICT is a meeting in which all the department heads of Group ICT need to come up with their new proposals on urgent topics. The head of the Directorate, Carl Tilkin-Franssens and most of the division heads are present to decide and comment on the feasibility of the projects.
2.3 Method

To get a better understanding of the document and to be able to make a proposal on the future approach we first made a thorough analysis of the document. Consequently, we came to recognize the problems our team was having with the Global Navigator. Several points of interest came to our mind:

1. The document was not up to date anymore.
2. The country-oriented structure of the document was rather unclear and insufficient to guide the user through the document.
3. The medium (PDF for printed version) was actually not suited for this kind of document.
4. Some mission statements were incomplete or difficult to understand.
5. The target group had not been described.
6. The ‘global’ perspective in Global Navigator had only vaguely been described.

During a meeting we had with Walter Carels and An Druyts, we expressed our findings and discussed some new approaches. We agreed that there was an urgent need to publish the Global Navigator again\(^\text{12}\) and thus it was decided that both a short and a long term track needed to be followed.

The short term track would imply some minor changes to the existing document with the objective to publish Global Navigator as soon as possible. The long term track would hold a change from the paper medium to an electronic medium. As a revision of the intranet of KBC – and consequently of Group ICT – has been planned for August 2008, the electronic version will have to wait until then so that the new functionalities and possibilities can be examined first.

\(^{12}\) The previous edition of Global Navigator had been published in PDF file on Group ICT Net, but was removed due to the difficulties that have been discussed in 2.1.
For the short term track, we agreed on a change from the country-oriented structure to a global-oriented structure. This means that general overview needed to be extended with the Central-European divisions and that the person in charge of coordinating these divisions would disappear. In practice we restructured the organisation chart as follows:

![Diagram of organisation chart]

Figure 10 Changes in the general organisation chart

As becomes clear from the revised chart, a ‘G’ was added to the global divisions. We thought it best to mark the divisions with at least one global department as being ‘global’ in the main structure. However, marking a department with a ‘G’ to show that the department is working on a global level was not enough.

An example can illustrate this issue. The Change & Communication Team is one of the departments that functions globally. This means that the team consist out of Belgians as well as Central-European people. In the Global Navigator, the department Change & Communication will consequently be marked with a ‘G’. Now imagine that an employee in Hungary has a communication related question and that he wants to contact somebody who is in charge of that. Browsing through the Global Navigator would tell him

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13 At the moment, Philippe Thibaut coordinates all divisions in Central-Europe but this function will disappear when the change has been implemented completely.

14 The editorial team also has an Indian member.
that he needs to contact the head of the Change & Communication department, Walter Carels. However, this might put him off as the use of the English language is still not that evident for a lot of people. Therefore, a local contact point in Hungary might be the solution.

Consequently, we decided to add local contact points for every country to the global departments. To make this approach understandable for the users of Global Navigator we thought it best to add a small description on the first page about how to use the document.

How to read this Global Navigator?

This Global Navigator guides you through the ICT house.

Start your trip at the main structure and find out more about the specific activities of every division when travelling on. A three-letter code is used to identify our divisions and departments.

Divisions that are marked with G have at least one global department.

You can find the local contact points L under these departments.

Figure 11 How to read the Global Navigator?

To find out what the opinion of the global department heads concerning this matter was, we sent them an e-mail to ask them. They all agreed with the new approach.

Another problem that surfaced during the meeting concerned the level of inclusion. To create a consistent and useful document, an agreement that stated the levels of inclusion was needed. However, this is a very sensitive point within Group ICT. As a result of the ‘global’ workings, some ranks changed and this point had not really been taken up in the previous version of the Global Navigator. Consequently, we decided to include the level of

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15 The complete revised Global Navigator can be found as Appendix 2.
the CEO of Group ICT, the level of general manager (division heads) and the level of general manager -1 (department heads).

This decision entailed a systematic revision of all organisation charts. At first, an e-mail was sent to the Central-European team members to ask them for an approved and up-to-date structure of their division taking into account the new rules. Nevertheless, there was still some confusion in certain cases so that a double check with the general managers themselves was needed. After several revisions, we ended up with an accepted structure.

The example below shows that there were some severe changes at times.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 12 Change in the organisation chart of ICT Slovakia**

The next step in the revision of Global Navigator was to analyse the mission statements and descriptions of the activities of the divisions and departments. At the same time we also rewrote the mission statement of the Global Navigator itself because we wanted to draw the attention upon the fact that it should be a user-friendly document that ‘guides’ the reader. We agreed that the target group for Global Navigator was all internal ICT employees in the first place, but especially newcomers, management and external vendors and customers.

Consequently, the mission statements and the descriptions of the activities sometimes needed to be simplified and adapted to the reader. We started by reading all the missions

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16 Structural changes within ICT Slovakia.
and activities and changed them whenever they were incomplete, unclear or too detailed. After that, we wrote some descriptions that were still missing or asked the responsible to provide them for us\textsuperscript{17}.

Now that everything had been revised, the question concerning how to keep Global Navigator up to date, popped up again. We had to take into account several issues:

1. There was need for a central point that would collect all modifications and implement them in the document.
2. Within every division or department, a responsible who would communicate the modifications needed to be appointed.
3. Not every modification could be implemented in the document immediately as this would create dozens of versions.

We solved these problems by placing the responsibility to communicate any modification with the general managers themselves as they have the best overview on their divisions. On the last page of Global Navigator the following remark was placed to make this clear:

\textbf{How to keep Global Navigator up to date?}

This Global Navigator has guided you through the divisions and departments of ICT Services.

Normally, the divisions managers will keep the information about their departments up to date. However, if you have encountered incorrect information in the Global Navigator, please contact us so that we can take care of the matter.

Contact: ict.goingglobal@kbc.com

\textsuperscript{17} As becomes clear from Appendix 2, several mission statements and descriptions are still incomplete.
our project assistant, Lut Meert, will send an e-mail to the general managers every month to ask them whether they have any comments on the current version of Global Navigator.

Subsequently, we applied all these decisions to the document itself by using Publisher. We also opted for a new lay-out that would unify Global Navigator with the other publications (Annual Overview and ICTaLIVE) by using the typical green and orange colours. Finally, we created a new cover which adequately expressed the ‘global’ character of Group ICT.

![New cover for Global Navigator](image)

Figure 14 New cover for Global Navigator

Of course, our new approach still needed the approval of the DOC ICT. Therefore, we created a PowerPoint presentation¹⁸ that summed up the main problems and solutions. On May 15, Walter Carels presented the new perspective and the draft version of Global Navigator. DOC ICT agreed upon the changes so that we could finalise the May edition of

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¹⁸ See Appendix 3.
the document. At the moment this Global Navigator was published on Group ICT Net, we wrote the following newsflash\textsuperscript{19}:

**Title: Global Navigator online again**

As from today the Global Navigator will be available online. This document guides you through the ICT divisions and underlying departments and tells you more about their activities. As some of our departments are already global, they have been marked with a ‘G’. In addition, every global department has its own local contact points. They have been marked with an ‘L’. The general managers of each division are responsible for keeping the content of their division up to date.

To facilitate the future adaptations to Global Navigator, we made a list of steps\textsuperscript{20} that describe how to update the document and a standard e-mail\textsuperscript{21} which can be send to the general managers to remind them to communicate the modifications within their division. We also provided a standard document\textsuperscript{22} that describes the use, language, format,... of Global Navigator.

**2.4 Future prospects**

As was mentioned in 2.3, we also planned a long term track for Global Navigator. In August 2008, the intranet of KBC will change and this will provide some new opportunities for Global Navigator. Especially the ‘who is who’ function with which you can search for every employee within KBC Group, might offer an interesting perspective. Taking these changes into account the team will make a new decision on Global Navigator towards the end of August 2008.

**2.5 Evaluation**

Overall, this was an interesting task to start the internship with because it was very varied and offered the opportunity to understand the company and its structure. Moreover, it obliged us to contact new people and talk with the general managers, which afterwards

\textsuperscript{19} See also Appendix 4.
\textsuperscript{20} See Appendix 5.
\textsuperscript{21} See Appendix 6.
\textsuperscript{22} This standard document is written for every official publication within Group ICT. See Appendix 7.
made it easier to call someone when we had a question. Although I really doubted the function and need of Global Navigator in the beginning, I can now see why such a document is needed. I even made use of it myself during my internship.

When discussing the new structures with our team members in Central-Europe, I became aware that their structures are still very hierarchical compared to Belgium and that this is a very sensitive point within Group ICT. For the Czech Republic for example, we had to change the structure three or four times because they always tried to keep more general managers-1 in the structure than was allowed. In the end, we even had to re-insert several persons. Anyhow, the only negative point I can find in Global Navigator is its format. For the moment it is still online in a PDF file which can be printed out. I am in great favour of an electronic version but this is, however, still for the future.
3. Project 2: Re-branding Group ICT

3.1 Background information
Group ICT originates from the ICT departments of the former bank and insurance companies KB, CERA and ABB. When these companies merged in 1998, all ICTers came together within KBC Group. However, in 2006 there was a reorganisation and from then on, the company has been called Group ICT. For its first birthday, a new logo and values were created. However, the rapid growth of KBC Group and Group ICT and the growing number of brands within the KBC portfolio, asked for a revision of the Group ICT brand. Consequently, another point on the agenda of the cross-border meeting that we attended was the re-branding of Group ICT.

3.2 Briefing
On the second day of the cross-border meeting with the Central-European team members, a first explanation of the re-branding was given by Paul Daels who is the image advisor of KBC Group. He gave a short presentation on the brand portfolio of KBC Group and explained the need for harmonisation within the Group. Due to this preferred uniformity, Group ICT would no longer be able to use its own name and logo but needed to adapt to the rules of the KBC brand portfolio. We heard that the new name of Group ICT would be ICT Services and its logo would be the familiar KBC ‘swimmer-logo’. At the end of the presentation, Paul Daels showed us what the new logo, name and endorsement line would look like.

![Figure 15 The new logo and name](image_url)
After the exposition of Paul Daels, I was invited to the break out session on re-branding. During this session we went through Paul Daels’ points again and tried to make a list with the starting principals we would need to follow when working out the re-branding plan.

1. Group ICT –as a name- cannot be used anymore.
2. We will be known as KBC ICT Services, internally as well as externally.
3. Our logo will be the KBC swimmer.
4. The Group ICT values\(^{23}\) remain the same.
5. Consequently there will be a change in brand, logo and name.
6. We will have to use an endorsement line.
7. We can still use existing Group ICT promotional material.

These principles would make up the core of the re-branding plan of Group ICT.

### 3.3 Method

#### 3.3.1 First draft

On the last day of the cross-border meeting, we discussed the re-branding principles once more with Walter Carels, Mariann Falusi and Monika Horvath\(^{24}\). We tried to work out the rough structure of the re-branding, taking into account the most important elements like target group, message,... To make sure we would have a strong theoretical framework underlying the plan, I used Kotler’s Marketing Management (2007) as a back-up.

The first point we considered was the change itself. We asked ourselves what the change and the message we would like to put forward, actually implied. It became clear that there were two reasons for the change: legal changes on the one hand and the need for a new identity on the other. Therefore, both the logo and name of Group ICT needed to be changed internally as well as externally on all new publications, communication channels, stationery and promotional material. We agreed that these changes could not happen overnight and that a solid approach was needed. When regarding the target groups that

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\(^{23}\) The values of Group ICT are IPRO (International, Professional, Respectful and Open), in contrast with the KBC PRO values (Professional, Respectful and Open).

\(^{24}\) These Hungarian ladies were attending the meeting because ICT Hungary would be the first to use the new name and logo.
would be involved, it was obvious that different approaches were needed. To avoid negative outcomes, we used the Commitment Curve to outline our approaches.

The curve shows that several stages of change support can be distinguished, ranging from mere awareness to commitment. When introducing a change, it has to be taken into account that every stage in the Commitment Curve requires a great deal of effort. Moreover, it is not always needed that everyone reaches the commitment stage. Consequently, we could distinguish several target groups and approaches:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Group</th>
<th>Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal ICT</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External ICT</td>
<td>Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal customers</td>
<td>Awareness (Belgium) – Understanding (Central-Europe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External customers</td>
<td>Awareness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from making people aware of the change, we also had to bear in mind the communication channels of Group ICT. As all these channels had been designed according to the Group ICT style and were provided with Group ICT logos, they would need to be altered too. During the meeting, we already set up an overview of all communication channels that would be involved in the change:
As the table reveals, some channels were not only in need of a visual change but of a change of name as well. Finally, we drew up a temporary timetable which included the most important dates for the re-branding in the different countries.

Starting from this provisional outline, we were asked to work out an outright proposal for the re-branding of Group ICT and a matching PowerPoint presentation. This proposal would then be submitted for approval on the DOC ICT of May 15.

### 3.3.2 Re-branding file

We thought it best to put all the principles and decisions on the re-branding of Group ICT in a file and support it with some theoretical evidence as to make it professional. In Appendix 8, you can find the result. The document starts off by giving a clear definition of a ‘brand’ (Kotler, 2007) because we experienced that the difference between brand, logo and name was not clear for most of our team members. Then, the need for re-branding, based on the presentation of Paul Daels, is specified. We inserted several visuals to sustain our arguments and to show the effect of the re-branding. Further, the official visual system for KBC brands is described, paying attention to the logo, descriptor, colours and graphic characteristics.

As ICT Services is a master brand in the KBC brand portfolio, a special endorsement procedure with fixed guidelines needs to be followed. As the last guideline of the procedure has been of great importance during the re-branding plan, I consider it useful to add it\(^\text{25}\) at this point.

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\(^{25}\) The guideline can also be found in Appendix 8, p.9.
Different situations ask for different names:

- **Name in internal document:** ICT Services
- **Name in external documents:** KBC ICT Services
- **Name in legal documents:** KBC Global Services NV (use corporate brand logo)

The document proceeds by explaining the importance of communication in the case of (re-)branding (Kotler, 2007), followed by the communication plan itself. The plan starts with a definition of the target group. As I already mentioned, the intended target group was rather diverse and when we were making the picture complete, we found out that there was even more variation within each target group.

To provide some theoretical evidence on the communication goals, we inserted two models of brand processing (Vyncke, 2007). These models both elaborate on the fact that brand commitment is always the result of a mental process and that it takes several stages to complete. We then associated these models with the Commitment Curve we used in the draft and explained the stages of change we would like to attain with the different target groups in mind.

After stating the core message of the re-branding, the document elaborates on the different communication channels of Group ICT. The first version of the file that was used on the DOC ICT was rather vague on this point. However, we arranged a meeting with Nancy Van Der Auwermeulen and Paul Daels to further discuss the change of our communication channels.

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26. To make sure we involved every employee that would be involved with the re-branding, we asked our Central-European colleagues to complete our original list. The full list can be found in Appendix 8, p.11.
27. The preparation of this meeting can be found as Appendix 9.
28. Ms. Van Der Auwermeulen is Graphic House Style Advisor & Co-ordinator within KBC Group.
Publications

We decided that Global Navigator and Annual Overview\(^{29}\) would be completely redesigned according to the KBC Group style. In the case of Global Navigator, it has been agreed that the exact changes will be discussed together with the possibilities of the electronic version. The design of Annual Overview will be adapted early 2009, when the new edition will be published. The Global ICT presentation templates have already been redesigned. An example can be found in Appendix 10. Together with Walter Carels, we decided to place the endorsement line (Member of KBC Group) on the first slide and leave out the last slide altogether. The re-styling of ICTaLIVE will be discussed in 3.4.

Intranet

As was already mentioned, the KBC intranet will completely be redesigned in August 2008. As part of this change, we assisted our team to choose a new template. Several possibilities were sent to us and we had to pick the colours that most suited our intranets. For the moment, Group ICT manages two intranets: Group ICT Net (global) and ICT Net (Belgium). However, the aim is to bring the Belgian ICT Net to close down in the near future.

So, when making a decision about the new name and design of these intranets, we thought of Group ICT Net as the most important electronic communication channel. As for the names, we decided that ‘ICT Net’ would be the most suitable name for the future global intranet, since we had to avoid using ‘Group’ in the new name. However, we had to take care that there would be no confusion between the two intranets in the future. Therefore, we opted to call the Belgian intranet ‘ICT Net Belgium’.

As for the colours, we chose the grey and blue template\(^{30}\) for ‘ICT Net’ and the grey and green template for ‘ICT Net Belgium’. The reason for this choice was that blue will be the future colour of ICT Services, while green has been one of the main colours of Group ICT.

\(^{29}\) Annual Overview is a document that is published once a year and that summarizes the main events of the previous year. It is also used externally.

\(^{30}\) The different templates can be found in Appendix 11.
We were also asked to think about the logos for ICT Net and ICT Net Belgium. We chose not to use the official KBC ICT Services logo as this would look too crowded and confusing. As can be seen in the example above, the designers of Group Net\textsuperscript{31} used the familiar blue circle for their intranet. We thought this might work for ICT Services too, as this established a clear link with KBC Group. For the ICT Net Belgium, we opted to use the name ‘ICT Net.be’ in the logo as this is shorter, easier in use and adds to the ICT character of the intranet. Nancy Van Der Auwermeulen provided us with these two temporary drafts.

\textbf{Figure 17} The chosen template for ICT Net

\textbf{Figure 18} The new logos for the intranets

\textsuperscript{31} Group Net is general intranet within KBC.
**ICT Events**

The ICT Roadshow and the Group ICT Management Forum are two events that are organised globally. In the future, the organisation will take care to adjust the colours and logos on e.g. banners or flags. Nevertheless, the name of Group ICT Management Forum will be changed too. We decided to change the name of the global forum into ‘ICT Management Forum’. Local Management Forums will have to add the name of the country in which they take place e.g. ICT Management Forum Poland.

**3.3.3 Time table**

Finally, we needed to plan the introduction of the change from Group ICT to ICT Services to the different target groups. As becomes clear from Appendix 8 p.18, we made a rather elaborated planning at first. However, we changed our original idea to a more simple and realistic planning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal ICT</th>
<th>Special edition ICTaLIVE</th>
<th>25/8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gadget</td>
<td>25/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External ICT</td>
<td>Online Newsflash</td>
<td>25/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers</td>
<td>Online Newsflash</td>
<td>25/8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that a special edition of the ICTaLIVE magazine will be published on the 25\textsuperscript{th} of August. We chose this date of publication because the new ICT Net and ICT Net Belgium will be launched at that day too. We will offer a nice gadget to all internal ICT employees in Belgium, Central-Europe and India. However, as the editing of this special edition was also part of our job responsibilities, I will elaborate on this topic in point 3.4.

To conclude the re-branding task, we made a PowerPoint presentation\textsuperscript{32} with our proposals for the DOC ICT. After the DOC, Walter Carels told us that the plan had been approved and that we could start the special edition of ICTaLIVE.

\textsuperscript{32} The PowerPoint as it was show non the DOC ICT, can be found in Appendix 12.
3.4 Future prospects

At the moment, the rebranding plan is more or less finished. The special edition of ICTaLIVE will announce the news to all internal ICT employees on August 25. All other stakeholders will be informed about the new name of Group ICT with a Newsflash. However, this is only the start of the project. To make the re-branding successful, the Change and Communication Team will have to steer the employees and make them use the new templates, intranets, etc. They will have to take care that the employees commit to the new name and logo as they have done to the former. ICT Services needs to become their identity and this will take some time.

3.5 Evaluation

As the re-branding was actually the core task of our internship, I add a lot of value to it. In contrast with the Global Navigator, we were not asked to merely gather information and structure it, but we were supposed to set up a complete re-branding strategy from the very first beginning. During the re-branding project, I learned that it is not possible not rely on theory only. We started out with the Commitment Curve and the different target groups for example, but in the end we reduced them again and focused on just two approaches. However, this does not mean that we lost time by making that exercise. On the contrary, I think it was a necessary step of the re-branding process but one that was rather difficult to bring into practice.

I also experienced that it is necessary to give up some ideas that might seem good, but that are difficult to carry out. Sometimes, time and feasibility are more important than originality. Actually one should constantly make a cost-benefit analysis when setting up large-scale projects.

Most of all, I am grateful that we were entrusted with a project that will have such an impact on the company. Although most people will hardly notice every change, let alone pay attention to it, I do feel rather proud that we could contribute to the change to ICT Services.
4. Project 3: ICTaLIVE

4.1 Background information

ICTaLIVE is a quarterly magazine that is published for ‘people who belong to ICT’\textsuperscript{33}. Since December 2007, an international editorial team has been writing a magazine that informs as well as diverts the ICT employees. In other words, the purpose of this magazine lies not only in announcing certain news or elaborating on a certain strategy, but also in showing the real men and women behind that news or strategy. By combining information and human interest, the editorial team aims to strengthen the global bond within Group ICT.

Due to its global character, ICTaLIVE is written in English only. At first, our task was to investigate the level of English of the texts in ICTaLIVE and compare it – by means of a survey or in depth interviews – with the average level of its target group. Additionally, we were asked to take a close look at the content of the magazine as well and try to find out whether the readers liked it or not. To put it briefly, we had to investigate whether ICTaLIVE could be called successful or not.

Since December 2007, two editions of ICTaLIVE\textsuperscript{34} have been published. To start with, we thoroughly read these magazines and wrote down our main findings and suggestions in a document\textsuperscript{35}. At the same time, we realised that it was too soon to put ICTaLIVE to a survey. On the one hand, the difference between the first and second edition clearly showed that this magazine was still growing and improving itself. On the other, we thought it would be almost impossible to check whether a magazine that has only been published twice could be called ‘popular’. On top of this, carrying out in depth interviews in all Central-European countries – though necessary for a valid result - would have been practically impossible during our internship. Therefore, we decided that the editorial team would do better by putting up a survey themselves within a year’s time to obtain a more truthful result.

\textsuperscript{33} This is part of the mission statement of ICTaLIVE.
\textsuperscript{34} These editions are both part of Appendix 13.
\textsuperscript{35} The document can be found as Appendix 14.
Around the same time, we were playing with the idea of the special edition of ICTaLIVE devoted to the re-branding of Group ICT. Together with Walter Carels and the editor-in-chief of ICTaLIVE, Patrick Van Oudenhove, we decided that it would be better if we assisted in the development of this special edition.

4.2 Briefing
In a certain way, the briefing for this project was part of the re-branding project, as we came up with the idea to announce the new name and logo of Group ICT via ICTaLIVE ourselves. Actually, this third project can be seen as a continuation or a ‘bringing into practice’ of the second project. However, the editor-in-chief reported on several features of the ICTaLIVE that we needed to bear in mind when writing.

1. The cover of ICTaLIVE always shows the bust or head of a person since ICTaLIVE is about people.
2. The tone of the magazine may be playful, but informative.
3. There are some recurrent formats like e.g. the comic, Lady Mc Apple.
4. An interview needs to draw the attention both on the professional and human aspect of the interviewee.

Considering these rules, we started with our own ICTaLIVE.

4.3 Method

4.3.1 The idea
The first thing that was necessary to make up the special edition of ICTaLIVE was a planning. Therefore, we made a document with several important points like the names of the editors, the content table, the page division and some other remarks. As this edition would be devoted to the re-branding it was clear that we would use this theme as a connecting thread in the magazine. We decided to write two articles concerning this topic. One article treating the need for re-branding, the other dealing with more practical information. Furthermore we also planned an interview with Paul Daels, who is

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36 With the help of Walter Carels.
37 The document can be found as Appendix 15.
responsible for the KBC brand, to elaborate on the matter. Apart from these articles, we asked the Hungarian and Polish members of the editorial team to gather some short reactions to the change to ICT Services in their countries. This kind of article had been used in the previous edition of ICTaLIVE and had proven to be a great success. Furthermore, we decided to include the comic and a Lady Mc Apple as well.

4.3.2 The articles

As Dorien Van Gorp and I would edit the magazine together, we split up the work as follows:

<table>
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<th>Editorial</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dorien and Marjolein</td>
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<th>Group ICT is dead...Long live ICT Services</th>
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<td>Dorien</td>
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<th>What’s in your suitcase?</th>
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<td>Marjolein</td>
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<th>Interview with Paul Daels</th>
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<tr>
<td>Questions: Marjolein</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview: Dorien and Marjolein</td>
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<td>Text: Dorien</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lady Mc Apple</th>
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<tr>
<td>Marjolein</td>
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We both started to write the main articles (Group ICT is dead...Long Live ICT Services and What’s in your suitcase?) as these followed the re-branding project itself. At that moment we were still thinking about a theme – besides the re-branding – that could guide the reader through the magazine. Together with some colleagues we did a bit of brainstorming and we came up with the idea of travelling. As a result, we have interpreted the re-branding story as a journey from one destination (Group ICT) to another (ICT Services). In the editorial we start our trip:

_In this very special edition of ICTaLIVE, we will guide you through the fascinating journey that Group ICT undertakes to become KBC ICT Services._

_On this trip you will find out what the re-branding is all about, what will change and what will be the consequences. To make sure you will arrive safely, some_
survival tips have been added. In this way, you’ll exactly know what to do in case of emergency.

So pack your suitcase and accompany us on our journey. Even though we cannot promise you sunshine, it surely will be unforgettable...

The first text, *Group ICT is dead...Long live ICT Services*, elaborates on the need for re-branding and pictures all the old logos as the stickers many tourists have on their suitcases. The new ICT Services logo will be one more sticker on the suitcase.

The text *What’s in your suitcase?* discusses all the practical changes that result from the change from Group ICT to ICT Services. The ICT publications, events, intranets, presentations and personal items are regarded as the luggage the ICT employees carry in their suitcase. When ICTaLIVE will be published in August, the article will be provided with a lot of visuals to enhance the explanations.

When we were drawing up the possible questions for the interview with Paul Daels, I tried to create a mix of interesting professional material, personal information and travel experiences. Together with the ‘10 choices’, the interview proved to be a success. We had a nice conversation about his work, his attitude towards brands and his love for Africa. The same afternoon, I received the following e-mail:

*Marjolein,*

*Ik vond ons gesprek deze morgen (middag) heel leuk. Het is interessant om te zien hoe vragen die je jezelf niet (meer) stelt, je doen nadenken en verplichten om een standpunt in te nemen. Ik vond dit maw een zeer goede ervaring en dat is jullie verdienste. Goed aangepakt! Maar, by the way, wie zorgt voor de Engelse tekst?*

*Paul*

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39 This part of the text has not yet been finished as there was still a discussion concerning the use of the logo on business cards, going on at the time our internship ended.
40 The questions can be found in Appendix 17.
Although, we wrote several scenarios for the comic, none of them was good enough so we decided to ask our team members at the next cross-border meeting\textsuperscript{41} to come up with some fresh ideas.

Finally, I wrote the Lady Mc Apple for this edition. In this recurrent format, an anonymous person writes his or her opinion on the theme of the ICTaLIVE. The text has to be written in a humorous, ironical and to the point style, but from an objective perspective. This time she got her teeth in the re-branding and the new swimmer logo that would replace the old Group ICT logo.

When all our texts were finished, we sent them to the editor-in-chief and another team member to correct them. They were both very pleased with the result.

\subsection*{4.3.3 The gadget}

As I already mentioned, we also planned to offer a small gadget to all internal ICT employees to celebrate the switch to ICT Services. We had several ideas, but none of them was very suitable or original. However, when we were busy writing the articles for ICTaLIVE in the light of travelling, we came up with the idea of an identity card. The only thing a traveller really needs to enter a new country is his or her identity card. Therefore, we decided to create the identity card of ICT Services and design it in such a way that it really resembled an international passport.

For the first birthday of Group ICT, all employees received a birthday card with the IPRO values of Group ICT on it. We had already seen that a lot of people were still keeping it on their desk. Because of the re-branding, this would be the ideal moment to exchange that card for an updated version. In any case, we decided to keep the values on the identity card as they are of such a great importance within the company.

At first, we made a planning\textsuperscript{42} of the gadget and a first prototype in which the whole idea behind the re-branding and the main changes were explained. However, it was agreed

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{41} This meeting takes place on June 9 till June 11 and we will attend the editorial meeting to further discuss the special ICTaLIVE edition.
\end{flushright}
upon that this might be a repetition of what was already mentioned in the ICTaLIVE itself, and that the information would soon render the identity card out-of-date. Consequently, we decided to reduce the card to a real postcard. In consultation with Nancy Van Der Auwermeulen, we also settled to reduce the format and to work in blue and silver colours.

The prototype we designed looks as follows:\n
\[\text{Figure 19 Prototype for the gadget}\]

The white page will be used to include a sticker with the new logo, so that employees can stick it on their ‘suitcase’ if so desired. Although, we already invited an offer for the sticker, the size we asked for was wrong\(^4^4\). Therefore, a new offer will have to be invited.

\subsection{4.4 Future prospects}

It is obvious that we have provided the team with the raw material and texts. However, in regard to the lay-out, a lot of work still needs to be done. On June 11, we will attend the cross-border editorial meeting and explain to the Central-European colleagues what our intentions are. They will have to take care of the missing texts, the comic and the photographs and visual material.

Due to the re-branding, the lay-out of ICTaLIVE will change dramatically. Until now, the editorial team itself was responsible for the lay-out, but they have decided to deal with this in a more professional way. In cooperation with Nancy Van Der Auwermeulen, we started to invite several external advertising agencies and printers for a meeting about

\begin{itemize}
\item See Appendix 18.
\item For a printed version, look in Appendix 19.
\item Due to the change from A6 to a smaller version.
\end{itemize}
this topic. However, when our internship ended, there was no agreement. Anyhow, the cover page has been discussed already. We asked Paul Daels to pose for the cover and we would somehow like to integrate the new ICT Services logo. Concrete arrangements, however, still have to been made.

**4.5 Evaluation**

Personally, editing the special edition of ICTaLIVE was the most challenging and enjoyable project during the internship. The idea that my texts will be read by more than 3000 people, is really thrilling. Again, I am very grateful to Walter and Patrick that they trusted us with this task and that we could put our ideas into practice. On the one hand they gave us carte blanche. On the other, they were there to help and steer us whenever it was needed. Thanks to this approach our originality has not been tempered, but we did not overdo it as we knew our limits.

I also experienced that having an original idea is only the start. Putting it into practice is yet something else. Writing a text out of nothingness is very difficult and demands a lot of effort. However, when a text is finished and has been approved, it is very rewarding. As for the interview, it was not easy to come up with questions that were interesting and serious but amusing at the same time. However, I suppose I managed that quite well thanks to the advice of the editor-in-chief.

I must say that there has been nothing negative about this project. It was a great experience to witness the creation of a company magazine from start to finish (almost). By attending the meeting about the lay-out of ICTaLIVE, I learned to structure my thoughts and ideas so as to explain them in a clear and coherent way. Because the meeting had been scheduled at an inconvenient time for several people, it was just me, Dorien and Nancy Van Der Auwermeulen. As a result, we had to brief her about the magazine, our expectations concerning the lay-out and much more.

To put it briefly, this project permitted me to be creative and write my own texts but obliged me at the same time to keep an eye on all aspects of the publishing process. Bearing into mind all the contacts and agreements we made, I think this project was a good example of what business life really is.
5. Other tasks

During the internship we also had to perform several small tasks. I will discuss them briefly.

5.1 Translations

During the first days of the internship, An Druyts asked us to help her with several texts that needed to be translated. The Dutch originals and the English translations can be found in Appendix 20. In the case of the Communication Wizard and the document concerning the Newsline, Dorien and I divided the texts in two equal parts and translated them. Afterwards, we exchanged them and corrected each other’s work.

The invitation for Mainframe was first rewritten in Dutch and then translated in English as the quality of the original text was not very high. We tried to use our marketing skill and made the invitation more attractive.

In the last week of our internship we were asked to translate two function descriptions. I took care of the function description of the ‘consultant internal communication’, while Dorien translated the other description. This translation can also be found in Appendix 20.

5.2 Presentation

On the second day of the cross-border meeting, I was attending the break-out session on the use of English in the Group ICT communication channels. Just before the session began, Walter asked me to take notes. I tried to follow everything that was said as much as possible and took notes. Moreover, in the middle of the session, Walter demanded me to make an overview of the decisions that were taken on the flip-chart. When the session was over, I was asked to give a small presentation on the decision for all the colleagues who were present for the cross-border meeting. Although I was very nervous at first, I managed to give a fairly structured account of the matter.
5.3 Traveller’s Community
Towards the end of the internship, Walter Carels asked us to think about a kind of online Traveller’s Community. As Group ICT is situated in Belgium as well as Central-Europe and India, many people have to travel regularly. However, there is very few information on Group ICT Net about travelling. Only the flight schedules and the locations of the KBC buildings can be found. Therefore, we were asked to make a list of all possible questions or needs a travelling person might have, ranging from hotels to currency rates.

Thereupon, we tried to draw up this list with the help of some travel guides and our own common sense. We wondered what we would like to know when we would be travelling to e.g. Poland tomorrow. This resulted in a rather exhaustive list which is included in Appendix 21. We also included a method to organise the information, bearing into mind the possibilities of Group ICT Net.

5.4 Invitation
In the light of the Traveller Community and the upcoming cross-border meeting, Walter requested me to write an informal and stimulating invitation for the planned evening activity that he would then send to our colleagues in Central-Europe. I wrote the following:

Colleagues,

I admit: your last stay in Belgium was a bit boring. Few drinks, only Italian restaurants, no funny colleagues to stroll in the streets of Antwerp, no enthusiastic guides,... I won’t let this happen again. Of course it is not easy to find a pleasant, amusing, relaxing, tasty, interesting AND healthy activity. However, I did (together with some colleagues). So if you want to have an exhilarating time, bring your comfy clothes and shoes (so no killer heels, ladies) and join us on Monday (9/6) late afternoon for a team activity that you will never forget!

5.5 Evaluation
Although these tasks were rather small, I found them instructive and varied. Translating a business related text is not as easy as it seems because there are a lot of fixed terms that need be translated correctly. However, I experienced that I am not shaped for
translations as this does not allow me to use my creativity and own ideas. The unexpected presentation I had to give was a bit frightening but it helped me to express my opinion in public more easily.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

When someone would ask me to describe my internship at Group ICT in one sentence, I would say that this is rather impossible as I have experienced and learned so much in just a few weeks time. On the first day of my internship, I was a bit nervous and scared to meet all these new people who make a good team. I thought it might be difficult to fit in or to come up with new ideas that would mean something for them. However, there was no need to be worried about all this. The team accepted me very quickly and I am sure that my work at Group ICT has been valuable for them. As they said, fresh and young ideas can open a whole new range of perspectives.

During the internship, I have always tried to approach every task as professional as possible. After the briefing, I made a list with all the aspects we needed to look into and I drew up a schedule so that there could not be any surprises. I think this is a profitable way of working as it is almost impossible to fail to remember something or to forget a promise you made to a colleague. In business, it is important to meet one’s commitments.

When taking a look at the tasks I performed at Group ICT, I am rather satisfied. I am glad that we could cooperate in some projects of importance and I feel we managed everything quite well. I also experienced that my studies in multilingual business communication, create a big advantage in the business world. I was able to take part in a wide range of conversations as knew something about the topics. However, I find it most regrettably, that MTB pays so much attention to the world of advertising and rather neglects topics as corporate communication.

I also learned that there is a big gap between theory and practice. Especially when we were drawing up the communication plan for the re-branding of Group ICT, I felt that it
was really hard to follow a theoretical framework. Although it offered some good ideas and starting points, we used a lot of our common sense to finalise the project.

Nonetheless, we had a lot of practice during the last year and I am sure this has paid off during my internship. I remember myself, at the start of the year, trembling when I had to do a presentation. Now, I am not afraid to talk in public anymore and I have gained a lot of confidence in my abilities. Some people congratulated me after my first presentation on the second day of the internship. They were amazed that I had been able to pick up all the information and present it in a coherent way. I really do think that this is the merit of MTB. Another positive point that I heard during my evaluation was my ability to adapt myself to different tasks and situations. According to me, this too is a consequence of the numerous tasks and teamwork I carried out during the last year. I am sure now that MTB has been the perfect preparation to start a business career.
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