

INTERVIEW

Interview with Ruud Hendriks -

Keynote speaker at the FTTH Conference 2016

The FTTH Council Europe: You are most famous as one pioneer of commercial radio and television in the Netherlands, but also more recently as a visionary involved in the development of start-ups throughout the world. What inspired your career shift from media entrepreneurship to business innovation at a larger scale?

Ruud Hendriks: As you said, I've always been an innovator, even during my years in the media industry. For instance, I was a co-founder of RTL Netherlands, bringing commercial TV to the Netherlands via satellite from Luxembourg: at Endemol I was responsible for the exploitation of the online version of 'Big Brother' which had a unique revenue model based on the number of subscribers through an Internet access provider. And way before the Internet got popular, I was already using Compuserve, a kind of fenced online network. However, I noticed the media industry remained in a conservative mode way too long and then decided to fully move to online innovation. My timing couldn't have been better but I also think it's not too late for others to do the same because I really believe the Internet will grow enormously in the coming years.

The FTTH Council Europe: Now, With your company Startupbootcamp, you mainly focus your work on start-ups. Based on your experience, how can fibre to the home (FTTH) help these new businesses to achieve success?

Ruud Hendriks: The Internet is still in its infant years. 3 billion people will come online in the next few years, and the Internet of Things will be another major leap forward. Cisco assumes that 50 billion devices will be connected around 2020. And Millennials, the main users of the sharing economy, expect reliability. Superfast, reliable connections like FTTH are crucial for new Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality products, but also for video, big data and mobile apps as well. I wish I lived in an area where I could already use FTTH, I'm really looking forward to that!

The FTTH Council Europe: What was your motivation to be keynote speaker of the FTTH Conference 2016, what does it mean to you?

Ruud Hendriks: I love addressing an interested crowd about innovation and as co-founder of RTL Netherlands, I visited our Luxembourg HQ almost monthly. I'm really looking forward to be back in the Grand Duchy. And, of course, I deeply enjoy sharing the lessons learned from Startupbootcamp and Innoleaps, our accelerator for corporations. Startupbootcamp now operates 13 offices in 10 countries. We see 15,000 startups every year. We can foresee where the internet is heading in the next 12 months. I'm glad many people are interested in what we can deduct from our big data.

The FTTH Council Europe: What can we expect from your keynote speech?

Ruud Hendriks: Delegates can expect lots of facts and clear examples of where the Internet is heading and which are the new companies to watch. I will also provide from my experience practical links with the Fibre industry. I'm currently already working on the Keynote speech. I've prepared 260 slides so I'll have to kill some of my darlings... I'll also give some very practical examples using video footage. My speech usually moves pretty fast, I put a lot of energy in them. So I don't think anybody will be bored!

The FTTH Council Europe: The FTTH Conference 2016 is under the theme "Calling for a brighter future". In your view, where is the technology industry heading to over the next ten years? What role do you think fibre to the home will play in this context?

Ruud Hendriks: The tech industry will utilize mobile, reliable, fast connections wherever possible. Millennials are definitely used to high quality, transparent products but we should not underestimate the dangers of a tech driven society. Cybercrime, loss of power and bad battery performance are all potential threats. Fibre is a proven fast and reliable technology. In my opinion it will become a crucial element of our society for many years to come.

But as I said, this is just the beginning. Half the world's population isn't online yet. Major parts of the world aren't even covered by mobile phones. In ten years, all of this would have changed. Also thanks to FTTH it'll be hard to find any spot on the globe not enjoying an Internet coverage.

About the FTTH Council Europe:

The FTTH Council Europe is an industry organisation with a mission to accelerate the availability of fibre-based, ultra-high-speed access networks to consumers and businesses. The Council promotes this technology because it will deliver a flow of new services that will enhance the quality of life, contribute to a better environment and increase economic competitiveness. The Council consists of more than 150 member companies. www.ftthcouncil.eu

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