

“However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results,” Churchill once said.

In the beginning of this year, we started working for what was then known as “the department of Virology of the Erasmus MC”. Six months later they have turned into the “Virosciencelab, where skills meet to study and protect”.

A new word was invented and coined: “Viroscience [vaiəˈrɒsaiəns] *non-count. n.* Area of medical science that comprises of all scientific disciplines that deal with viruses.” And top science has a face now.... Have a look at www.virosciencelab.com!

At the same time, we started developing the “Science Inspired Tales – SIT” for the European Scientific Working group on Influenza. On 23 May, three top scientists got on stage in the Brussels Albert Hall theatre. After the event, many attendees told us they had the feeling that something very special had been going on. We could not agree less. Renowned scientists bringing their story on stage: a brand new concept to experience science. To savour the flavour of SIT, have look at any of our pioneering performers: Peter Openshaw’s *Our germs, our guns: an uneasy peace* will teach you everything you need to know about the immune system in 18 inspiring minutes ... Colin Russell’s tale called *Viruses travel tricky routes* may look like science fiction – but it isn’t. And Ab Osterhaus raises an interesting question: *Viruses: are we winning battles but losing the war? Are we?* [Enjoy!](#)

The concept of SIT? [Check our trailer.](#) And SIT may be coming to a theatre near you soon, because our concept is for sale: we have the ambition to organise SITs worldwide... In the aim to bring science closer to people. In a fun way. Realization of a great ambition.

Talking about ambition... Someone very precious to me once said you should not discard or bypass your ambitions. We @ Semiotics wholeheartedly agree. Some members of our team are working on a book... “From corporate identity to corporate soul...” It’s about how the word “identity” ceases to be applicable to organizations. “It is soooo eighties”, my stepson would say. “Corporate” and “identity” may even turn into conflicting terms... Companies and organisations will have a hard time if they continue to rigorously impose a self-chosen identity. Rigid concepts do not fit in our current, rapidly changing world. What is the solution? It is looking at the combined characteristics of people in an organization, translating these insights in new strategies knowing that every organization is an integral part of society and – at the same time – constantly demonstrating the organization’s benefits to society.

Another member of our team is working with his ambition as well. We proudly present: www.davidepooter.net. Have a look and get inspired! We @ Semiotics follow many different paths to demonstrate what we stand for!

And, finally, let’s look ahead. Well, we will be travelling quite a lot in the coming months. For the European Scientific Working group on Influenza, we are investigating pandemic preparedness in nine European countries with the US situation as a point of reference. How well was the world prepared before the H1N1 pandemic, what happened during the pandemic, and are we prepared for the next one? The outcome of this “Flu Quest” will be ready in December 2012. We’ll keep you updated because it concerns us all.

We are also working on HIV in South Africa – helping scientists who are studying the link between herpes virus infections and ocular diseases in HIV-infected patients. A very new field of investigation, proud to be part of it!

And the organizers of the World Congress on Influenza (Options meeting) invited us to check the possibilities to organize a “Science Policy Interface” (SPI) for them in September 2013. This separate programme track for public health officials already ran 3 times at the European Conferences organized by ESWI. Implementing this on a world scale is very challenging for us. We go for it!

I’ve had this song stuck in my head for the last few days. It is called: “Summertime and the living is easy”. Part of the lyrics goes like this: “One of these mornings, you’re bound to rise up singing. Then you’ll spread your wings and take to the sky.”

Enjoy the rest of the summer!
Chris Vanlangendonck