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PRESS RELEASE



It is with the greatest sadness that we learn of the death of Jean-Pierre Pernaut.

Gilles Pélisson, Thierry Thuillier, the TF1 and LCI news teams, and everyone at TF1 share the grief and sorrow of his family and loved ones.

Television has lost one of its greatest journalists; TF1 has lost one of the family.

After joining TF1 in 1975, he fronted the TF1 lunchtime news for over thirty years. His longevity in the job was unrivalled, and was rewarded by unwavering loyalty from viewers, right up to his last news bulletin on Friday 18 December 2020. So for French people, he was part of the family. Jean-Pierre Pernaut was also voted France's favourite TV presenter numerous times.

A journalist gifted with an extraordinary common touch, he was extremely committed and his enthusiasm never waned. Even with over 7,000 daily newscasts behind him, he still prepared each one as if it were his first. It was a point of honour for him to provide news that addressed the daily concerns of our fellow-citizens. In taking the reins of the lunchtime news in February 1988, he invented the concept of local news on national TV, with his brilliant idea of building a network of correspondents in every region of France, helping to cement the programme's success.

Over all those years, his news bulletins reflected his love of France's regions and his affection for our heritage, culture and traditional skills. He took a keen interest in economic issues and the purchasing power of ordinary French people – issues that he frequently explored in his news bulletins, and which led him to join forces with Christophe Dechavanne in creating the show *Combien ça coûte*, which he hosted from 1991 to 2010.

Once again ahead of his time, he launched the “SOS Villages” initiative in 2001, to help revitalise the local economy in a very practical way by linking up small retailers and tradespeople right across France, not to mention the “Votre plus beau marché” campaign in 2018 to highlight low food miles and local producers. Locked down during the COVID-19 pandemic, he maintained his daily bond with viewers by hosting the lunchtime news from his home as “Le 13H à la maison”.

Jean-Pierre Pernaut also covered the biggest French and international news stories. Many will recall bulletins entirely dedicated to world events like the fall of the Berlin Wall, or presented live on location during the Chernobyl disaster and the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York. Politics was also part of his repertoire, with major programmes like *Paroles de Français* and *Face aux Français*, and an exclusive interview with Emmanuel Macron a year into his presidency, broadcast from a primary school classroom in the Normandy village of Berd’huis.

Jean-Pierre Pernaut contributed to the free-to-air launch of the LCI rolling news channel with his *Au cœur des régions* show, first broadcast in 2016. Online, he launched JPP TV, a digital platform dedicated to regional heritage, culture and news in December 2020. And from January 2021, he presented his weekly show on LCI, *Jean-Pierre et vous*.

But Jean-Pierre was above all a man of character: passionate, sincere, committed, warm – and devoted to his job, his colleagues in the news team, and his viewers. We will miss him sorely.

Gilles Pélisson, Chairman & CEO says: “Huge sadness ... Jean-Pierre was a role model for the TF1 news team. He created our lunchtime news and was its mainstay for over thirty years, embodying a new type of journalism closer to French people. I count myself lucky to have known him and worked with him. My warmest thoughts go to his wife Nathalie and their children at this very difficult time.”

Thierry Thuillier, Executive Vice President of News says: “Today is a very sad day for us... Our news team has lost a consummate professional who has left his mark on the history of French TV. We have lost a friend and a mentor who helped build the careers of so many journalists, of whom I had the good fortune to be one. Jean-Pierre, it is with emotion but also with immense gratitude that we are thinking of you, that I am think of you, and of your wife Nathalie and your children.”

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