SOCIAL IMPACT through business

The business school that thinks and lives in the future
REMEMBER WHEN YOU WERE A STUDENT?

Please share your memories...

We always hear from prospective MBA students that they would like to connect with alumni to get a sense of our school and our MBA programmes. They want to know the “look and feel” of who we are, we believe our alumni are the best ambassadors to show them and to share their personal RSM MBA memories.

Please join us in sharing the RSM spirit by:

- Joining one of our recruitment events in person or online
- Being a contact for questions and/or conducting interviews for us
- Following MBA Marketing & Admissions

E-mail Denise van Dijk-Chasney (dchasney@rsm.nl) at the MBA Admissions office for more information.
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AND MORE...
G&D Europe B.V. was founded in 2010 by Erasmus alumni Jan-Paul Vegten Yonggao Liu. It started out as a small company with the aim to improve the quality of living of Chinese babies and pregnant women by exporting high quality European products to China. The main items that are exported to China include: baby food, baby items, milk and mineral water.

In order to take care of branding, marketing and distribution of the products in China, G&D Distribution was established in 2011. Since then numerous product are covering the Chinese market.

Do you have a good idea, product or service that you want to bring to the Chinese market? Feel free to contact us in order to find out how we might be of help for you.

Dutch/Chinese management > 150 distributors > 20,000 points of sales
Letter from the dean

At the end of this year we will celebrate some great achievements as well as the festive season.

First, I want to say how proud I am of EUR’s Rotterdam spirit of “doing”, when it opened the doors of its sports centre to around 200 Syrian refugees – men, women and children – in September, and again in October. EUR and RSM students and staff helped to make this happen, proving that we’re part of a real and caring community.

I’m also very proud of some recent rankings: we achieved the Financial Times’ top five worldwide in the Masters in Management ranking for our MSc in International Management. The relatively new Shanghai Ranking puts Erasmus University at number four in Europe and 29 worldwide for economics and business; the QS World University ranking puts RSM 17th worldwide and number nine in Europe, and the USA-based Corporate Knights places us at number 33 in their 2015 Better World MBA ranking.

Our bachelor cohorts are becoming increasingly international and our student numbers are increasing, thanks in part to the introduction of “blended learning” to the Dutch-language Parttime Master Bedrijfskunde programme, which puts us more easily within reach for people wanting to improve their business education wherever they are in the country. This programme is delivered as a mixture of conventional lectures and tutorials combined with online presentations and sessions.

We’re preparing for the introduction of selective admission for our Master programmes in 2017 – in common with most European universities. Our recent Graduate Placement Survey 2015 finds that RSM students are truly a source of international and highly skilled managers for organisations based in the Netherlands and beyond. The report also found that half of our graduates find a job before they graduate – that’s a great reason to come to RSM.

Our research activities this autumn emphasised the importance of valorisation. We’ve seen the new knowledge we’ve created being transferred into management, industry and society, thus strengthening our links and increasing our relevancy to the world.

For example, we hosted another successful RSM Leadership Summit, which opened up the personal leadership survival kits of three high-profile business leaders – you can find out more on page 22, and there’s an exclusive interview with keynote speaker Marijn Dekkers, CEO of Bayer, on page 18. As always, the summit was a great way to connect with the business community.

We launched a new programme that recreates the centuries-old trade route between Cologne in the west of Germany and Rotterdam. Faculty members from the University of Cologne and RSM have developed the Cologne-Rotterdam Executive MBA; its first students will be welcomed in Cologne in September 2016.

We’re increasingly busy with steering new knowledge straight into business through our growing portfolio of Executive Education programmes. We are very optimistic about this sector of business education; our programmes provide essential business skills, advanced business skills, and personal development – a crucial part of any successful career path. You can read how we helped Deutsche Telekom to develop its community of strategists on page 44.
Less than a year ago, we saw that we could help business professionals who want to deepen their knowledge within their own field of expertise. The result was the launch of our newest programme, the Part-time PhD in Management, which was enthusiastically received by the business community. The intake in October was almost double what we expected. Candidates have backgrounds and expectations that differ from those of our full-time PhD researchers, but having these smart business people active at RSM gives us access to new talent, to new data from business, and to new connections to business. It also brings us a better understanding of business practices so we can continue to develop research questions that are of real practical value.

“" We will need your help in our campaign to mobilise our alumni in a shared effort to advance the school.”

Our research frequently looks deep into relationships within business, and in this issue of *RSM Outlook*, we explore RSM’s increasing role in researching the value of social enterprises, and businesses in partnership with societal organisations. Our Social Impact feature (pgs 32-39) includes the views of RSM faculty members deeply involved in the subject, as well as alumni who have direct experience of working at partnership interfaces in organisations such as the Red Cross, and from alumni whose passion is the social enterprises they have created.

And finally, we are starting to see the fruits of alumni fundraising efforts in the form of new scholarships and new opportunities for students of the future. We hope you’ll want to join in when you read the round-up of the latest “giving back” opportunities on page 50.

What a good year it has been. Here’s wishing you all the best for the festive season, and for a busy and prosperous 2016.

*Steef van de Velde*
Dean & Professor
Rotterdam School of Management
Erasmus University
Alumnus Pieter van der Hoeven (MBA 2014) won the first-ever Legal Tech Startup Award 2015 for his company Clocktimizer, which enables in-depth analysis of law firms’ internal operations using big data business intelligence software. He and co-founder Bram Fokker received the award in October at PLEIT, a conference focusing on IT for legal service operations.

Alumna Sophia Blichfeldt (MSc Marketing Management 2013) won Best Master Thesis Award at the Digital Communications Awards 2015 for The Effect of Brand Personality on Consumer Engagement. Two out of three shortlisted theses were from RSM alumni. Sophia received her award at a gala ceremony in Berlin in September.

RSM and the University of Cologne have launched a new Executive MBA programme (CR-EMBA) with English-taught classes in Cologne, Germany. The 24-month, part-time international executive development programme for managers will take its first students in September 2016, preparing them for doing global business and helping them to attract international clients. It’s based on RSM’s top-ranked EMBA.

A list of the 71 most influential scientists in the world has two Dutch scholars: RSM professors Justin Jansen and Henk Volberda. Our two “Highly Cited Researchers 2015” in the field of economics and business were recognised by business information organisation Thomson Reuters, which looked at frequently cited articles between 2002 and 2012. Jansen and Volberda have produced “hot research” that has affected the future of the discipline and is most frequently acknowledged by peers.

The supervisory board of Erasmus University Rotterdam has appointed Kristel Baele as president of its executive board, effective 1 December 2015. She will succeed Pauline van der Meer Mohr, who is stepping down after nearly six years. Baele is currently interim chairman of the University of Applied Sciences Leiden.

Distinguished RSM alumna Meiny Prins (Parttime Master Bedrijfskunde 2002) has been recognised as one of the first 100 AACSB Influential Leaders by AACSB International, joining other notable business school alumni. The 100 leaders on the list are making an international impact through their business acumen, leadership, or entrepreneurial success.

**BRAND PERSONALITY THESIS WINS AWARD**

**LEGAL TECHNOLOGY START-UP**

**HOT RESEARCHERS**

**NEW EXECUTIVE MBA IN COLOGNE**

**NEW PRESIDENT FOR ERASMUS UNIVERSITY**

**INTERNATIONAL IMPACT**
SAILING ACTION AT RSM REGATTA

More than 40 alumni and students from RSM and other business schools put leadership skills into sailing action on the Ijsselmeer north of Amsterdam at the sixth annual RSM MBA Regatta in August. They raced Olympic-class sailing boats in mixed fleets in an event organised by the RSM Sailing Club. Ultimately, two teams from Moscow School of Management took first and second place while RSM came third.

TOP FIVE AND #1 IN FT RANKINGS

In October’s Financial Times’ 2015 Global Masters in Management ranking, RSM strengthened its position into the top five. The 2015 evaluation of RSM’s MSc in International Management indicates that career progress and salaries for the 2012 cohort of graduates went well. The FT ranking also placed RSM number one worldwide for international mobility, indicating that many graduates embark on international careers.

TELL US WHAT YOU WANT FROM RSM OUTLOOK

After graduating and long after leaving Rotterdam, RSM alumni can keep in touch with the school, for example through this twice-yearly RSM Outlook magazine. We want to know how we’re doing, so please tell us what interests and inspires you in our 10-minute online survey.

‘RSM’s alumni and editorial team want to make sure they serve up relevant and valuable content for RSM Outlook’s readership, which now numbers around 30,000,’ said Joep Elemans, director of RSM’s Corporate, Career and Alumni Relations department. ‘And we also want to know if the printed-paper magazine is the best way to deliver it. Do you want to read more about senior alumni or faculty research, or are you more interested in personal stories and executive interviews? Would you, your colleagues or employees find news of new courses and executive education useful? Or do you have new ideas for features?’

The survey, which can be found at www.rsm.nl/outlooksurvey, closes on 31 January 2016.

We’ll draw four respondents’ names out of the hat to win an item of their choice from the RSM Store (www.store.rsm.nl), and we’ll draw one respondents name to win a free seat on one of our RSM Executive Education open programmes.

‘We really appreciate you taking the time to complete the survey,’ says Joep. ‘The more responses we get, the better the magazine can become.’

www.rsm.nl/outlooksurvey
MANAGEMENT AWARD FOR POLICE RESEARCH

Professor Joep Cornelissen from RSM’s Corporate Communication Centre won the prestigious Best Published Paper Award 2015 from the Academy of Management. His research dug deep into interactions and communications between police officers in London during a UK anti-terrorist operation when innocent civilian Jean Charles de Menezes was mistaken for a suicide bomber, with fatal consequences. Cornelissen received the award in Vancouver in August. Watch Prof. Cornelissen discuss his research at www.rsm.nl/discovery

CALLING SINGAPORE-BASED ALUMNI

Picture the scene: a rooftop bar in Singapore with magnificent views of the Central Business District and Marina Bay. This was where eight RSM alumni of eight nationalities from the classes of 1989-2011 met up for a reunion in July. The RSM Local Chapter in Singapore is led by Ronald Schepers (Executive MBA 1997) and they’ll be doing it again in December – don’t miss it! Find out more at www.rsm.nl/events or EMAIL alumni@rsm.nl

REFUGEES HOSTED AT ERASMUS SPORT

About 200 refugees, mostly women and children, were welcomed to the Erasmus Sports Centre on Woudenstein campus in September where they stayed for six days. The City of Rotterdam co-ordinated with Erasmus University and professional aid organisations including the Red Cross and COA (Central Organisation for Refugees) to support the refugees who were helped by aid workers and more than 1,200 student and staff volunteers. The sports centre also cooked for 270 refugees over one weekend in October.

EUR TOP IN EUROPE

RSM and sister faculty Erasmus School of Economics have put Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR) at the top of the Shanghai ranking for universities teaching business and economics in mainland Europe. EUR is fourth in Europe as a whole, just behind top universities in the UK, and inside the top 30 of the global rankings for business and economics for the second year running.

RSM AND ROTTERDAM IN JAKARTA

RSM and Rotterdam visited Indonesia in August when around 120 alumni, corporate partners and prospective students of RSM greeted Rotterdam’s mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb at the Erasmus Huis, a cultural venue of the Dutch embassy in Jakarta. The event was opened by Dutch ambassador Rob Swartbol, and a panel with Dean Steef van de Velde and alumnus Putu Yudha (MBA, 2009) discussed the value of international students at RSM. WEB www.rsm.nl/meetus

ALUMNI GATHER IN SOFIA

Bulgaria-based RSM alumni gathered in Sofia for an interactive business networking event during the summer. Lyuben Belov, managing partner at LAUNCHub, and Georgi Dinev, CEO at bERS Logistics, spoke to 30 alumni about their entrepreneurial experiences including challenges and financial issues. The event was organised by RSM Local Chapter leaders Mariya Kisyova (MSc Strategic Management 2011) and Ruslana Toncheva (MBA 2005), and Mihael Mladenov (MSc Strategic Management 2010).

WEB www.rsm.nl/localchapters
INNOVATION ON FULL POWER

A fully powered Erasmus Energy Forum in June gathered experts from business, politics and academia; they agreed that regulations must keep up with the increasing speed of innovation in the transition to decentralised renewable energy. The Forum was organised by RSM in collaboration with Port of Rotterdam. Speakers highlighted the need for governments and industries to make way for innovation – and for a multi-faceted approach from all stakeholders.

IEA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Jan Dul, professor of technology and human factors at RSM, won the 2015 International Ergonomics Association (IEA) Distinguished Service Award, which is presented once every three years for outstanding contributions to the promotion, development and advancement of the IEA and the profession. Prof. Dul received the award at the IEA Triennial Congress in Melbourne, Australia in August. He has served the IEA as a council member for Dutch society, and on numerous other committees including its executive committee from 2006-2009.

TACKLING LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES WITH BIG DATA

Data techniques that can be used for business objectives are part of a new RSM Executive Education programme. Leadership Challenges with Big Data is a collaboration between RSM and Erasmus School of Economics for professionals in technical and methodology-oriented data science. Read more about this eight-day modular programme at www.rsm.nl/lcbd

JAAP SPRONK’S VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

Jaap Spronk, professor of financial management science at RSM, gave his valedictory address in September. Let’s Change Finance addressed financial crises and the often-repeated question: who was responsible? The professor argued that the financial research agenda and financial education both need an overhaul. Prof. Spronk will continue to lecture at RSM and at the University of Curaçao.

GOLD FOR RSM CHAPTER

RSM's Graduate Net Impact Chapter, part of the RSM MBA Student Association, was awarded Gold standing for achievements in the past year. Net Impact is a non-profit membership organisation for students and professionals interested in using business skills to support social and environmental causes.

ALUMNI VISIT MILAN EXPO

Three Alumni Local Chapters – Milan, Zurich and London – joined forces for the first pan-European social networking event for RSM alumni in October. The 20 alumni from RSM and some from other business schools travelled from across Europe to Milan for an excursion to the world fair Expo Milano 2015. www.rsm.nl/localchapters
NEW ONEMBA ALUMNI

A festive graduation ceremony on campus in the summer welcomed 25 new OneMBA alumni to the network. Programme co-creator Prof. Mike Page encouraged the OneMBA Class of 2015 to challenge themselves and inspire others to experiment, continue learning and seek intersections across boundaries. Congratulations, and welcome to the RSM alumni network!

WEB www.rsm.nl/onemba

NEW TO THE NETWORK!

In total, 1,285 graduates from 12 full-time MSc programmes joined the RSM alumni network in October. Almost 600 attended the two graduation ceremonies in Rotterdam’s De Doelen. Keynote speakers included Port of Rotterdam CEO Allard Castelein and former CEO of Heineken René Hooft Graafland, who encouraged graduates to take opportunities in their careers. Student addresses came from Anna Huber (MSc Accounting & Financial Management), Teus Jan van Ekeren (MSc Finance & Investments), and Maksym Bilyachenko (MSc Strategic Entrepreneurship) who said 'It’s never too late to start something new. Learn continuously!'

WEB www.rsm.nl/alumni

I WILL REWARD YOUR AMBITION WITH €15,000

Steef van de Velde
Dean
Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University

DO YOU HAVE A WORLD-CLASS PLAN THAT SHOWS WILLPOWER, AMBITION AND THE DESIRE TO BE ACTIVE FOR CHANGE? TURN YOUR PLAN INTO ACTION!

THE BEST PLAN WILL WIN €15,000. WILL YOU JOIN?

RSM.NL/IWILL-AWARD

I WILL AWARD 2016
LONDON SUMMER PICNIC

There’s a new tradition of summer picnics in London’s Regent’s Park for the Local Chapter in London. Fifteen RSM alumni took part in this year’s August event organised by Sofya Shuster (MSc Finance & Investments 2011). Why not drop by next time? Email alumni-london@rsm.nl and follow the event calendar for more information www.rsm.nl/localchapters

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD FOR ALUMNUS

Alumnus Jordy Kool (Executive MBA 2004), CEO of information technology and services organisation Infotheek, was named EY Accelerating Entrepreneur of the Year 2015 at Cruise Terminal Rotterdam in early October 2015. ‘RSM taught me how to think as an entrepreneur and as a manager, as well as how to always look at the bigger picture,’ he said.

THE BUSINESS OF MUSEUMS

Business could learn from the way that Dutch art museums manage their good reputations – which they use to secure partners and sponsors. Museums continue to grow in popularity and their reputations exceed those of top-performing Dutch companies. So says RSM’s Professor Cees van Riel in a video recently published on the RSM Discovery knowledge portal. To find this and other research-related videos, as well as a growing body of management articles, visit www.rsm.nl/discovery

THREE NEW CHINA LINKS

Over the summer RSM formalised three relationships with Chinese institutions; the Global Institute of Supply Chain and Logistics (GISCL) created with the School of Economics and Management, Beijing Jiaotong University; a partnership for teaching case development with the College of Business of Shanghai University of Finance and Economics (COB); and a new office for RSM at Western Business School on the Guanghua Campus of Southwestern University of Finance and Economics (SWUFE) in Chengdu, which will open in 2016.

RESEARCH IMPROVES NETWORK TRAVEL

Train commuters dreading winter disruptions can take hope from a PhD thesis that promises better alternative routes. Evelien van der Hurk worked with Dutch railway operator NS to propose using data from travel card systems plus smart phone apps to produce new personalised travel plans when the network is disrupted. Evelien explains how her research can help customise travel options for commuters in a recently published video to be found on the RSM Discovery knowledge portal. To watch this and other research-related videos as well as to read a growing library of management-related articles, visit www.rsm.nl/discovery

NEW PART-TIME PHD PROGRAMME

Almost twice the expected number of candidates started the new Part-time PhD in Management programme in September, which is led by academic director, Vareska Van de Vrande. Participants want to add in-depth knowledge to their existing expertise, have different backgrounds and expectations from full-time PhD researchers, and add to RSM’s research capabilities. www.rsm.nl/research/part-time-phd

ECO-RESTORATION BOOK PRESENTED TO UN

Willem Ferwerda, executive fellow business and ecosystems at RSM, presented his book 4 returns, 3 zones, 20 years, which explores ecological restoration through building relationships between farmers and landowners, investors, companies and governments, to Monique Barbut, Executive Secretary of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification during the UNCCD COP12 Conference in Ankara in October. A copy was also presented to Dutch King Willem Alexander in China.
NEWS / IN BRIEF

GIANTS OF THE CARIBBEAN

Alumnus Vincent Kneefel (MSc Global Business and Stakeholder Management 2011) combines management consultancy in the USA with his superb wildlife photography. He has collected his best work showing endangered megafauna species into a book, Giants of the Caribbean. He plans to return to RSM soon to give a guest lecture to current master students about working with sustainable development. [WEB www.giantsofthecaribbean.com]

RECRUITING IN TAIWAN

RSM’s Taipei office and Erasmus University’s China Center have been busy letting potential students and universities know of the study and research opportunities in Rotterdam. They worked on strengthening the network of RSM and EUR in East Asia with, among others, the Netherlands Trade & Investment Office and the National Taiwan University as well as through education and recruitment fairs in Taiwan, South Korea and Vietnam. For more about networking opportunities for alumni in Asia, see [WEB www.rsm.nl/events]

ALS BLOGGER BOOK PUBLISHED

Dutch TV host Jeroen Pauw conducted an inspiring and humbling interview with EMBA alumnus Garmt van Soest about his battle against amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) recently. We described how Garmt’s fellow alumni joined forces to develop a fundraising strategy to discover a cure for the disease (ALS) in RSM Outlook, summer 2014. The recent interview coincided with the publication of Garmt’s book, ALS DAN TOCH. Details of this and his other fundraising activities are on his blog at [WEB http://alsdantoch.com]

EKOBABY SCHOLARSHIP

A new scholarship started to take shape in October. The new annual Ekobaby scholarship of €3,000 allows a Chinese student to start or continue studies at EUR, and it’s named after the export business of Jan-Paul Vegt (MSc Finance & Investments 2009) and his business partner Yonggao Liu (Erasmus School of Economics, MSc Marketing 2009).

MICROFINANCING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The details of investing in a microfinance bank in Honduras were explained by five representatives from FMO, of which three are RSM alumni. María Niño, Konstantinos Moutsioulis and Heli Vallejo (all MBA 2014) from the Dutch entrepreneurial development bank covered and shared their experiences in investing in companies and financial institutions in developing countries during a workshop for students in October.

NEW YORK MARATHON

Two RSM alumni (that we know of!) completed the TCS New York City Marathon in November. Alumnus Robbert Brouwer (BScIBA 2014 and former chairman of RSM study association STAR) raised almost €7,000 for KIKA, a charity funding research into cancer in children. Robbert finished in 4:30:11 hours. Fellow runner Gert-Jan ter Weeme (OneMBA 2011) raised funds for CliniClowns, an organisation that delivers bedside fun to sick and disabled children.
YOUR KEY TO SUCCESS

THE FOUNDATION COURSE IN CORPORATE COMMUNICATION 2016 - 25-28 JANUARY 2016

This four-day executive course focuses on the latest developments, insights, models and frameworks in corporate communication and business administration and forms a solid foundation to further deepen your knowledge and skills in the field of corporate communication.

The Foundations of Corporate Communication will take place from 25 till 28 January 2016 at four-star Golden Tulip Jagershorst hotel in Leende, the Netherlands. During this course you will explore:

- Trends in reputation management, branding and positioning
- Organisational identity, stakeholder analysis and strategic management
- Research based solutions for managing corporate communication
- How to apply competitive analysis, academic models and co-ordination mechanisms

Corporate Communication Centre

The Foundations Course in Corporate Communication is part of the Executive International MSc in Corporate Communication programme, offered by RSM’s Corporate Communication Centre and is open to managers in the wider business community. The Corporate Communication Centre is a joint initiative of RSM and the business community, and aims to develop and expand knowledge in the field of corporate communication.

MORE INFORMATION?

Please contact Susanna Marco at: Corporate Communication Centre
T: +31 (0) 10 408 2851
E: ccc@rsm.nl
W: www.rsm.nl/mcc

DAY 1  On the first day the focus will be on the overall concept of corporate communication and placing this in the organisational context.

DAY 2  During the second day we will go into detail about conceptualisation and paradigms of organisational identity.

DAY 3  On the third day, we will discuss the new trends in external communication and the strategic choices to build external trust.

DAY 4  On the final day we will discuss how to manage the corporate communication process by using a corporate communication dashboard / action plan that impacts business performance positively.

PART-TIME PHD PROGRAMME IN MANAGEMENT

New knowledge from research is always needed in business. Sometimes, the best person to carry out that research is you.

Highlights:

- Thorough training in research methods and skills
- Supervision and coaching by RSM’s top research faculty
- Access to RSM’s excellent research facilities

Are you interested in further developing your academic skills while working? Submit your application before June to start in September 2016.

More information: WWW.RSM.NL/RESEARCH/PART-TIME-PHD

ROTTERDAM SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
ERASMUS UNIVERSITY
Keep up to date with the professional advancements of fellow alumni as they develop their careers and move not only to new positions and companies, but also to different countries. Making a career move? If so, contact us at alumni@rsm.nl

**Vishal Solanki**  
MSc Finance and Investments 2013  
The former process engineer with Jacobs Engineering Group becomes inspector of chemical production technology, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.  
*Effective: May 2015*

**Jennifer Tucker**  
OneMBA 2007  
Previously director/owner of AAPE Media & Education Consultancy in the Netherlands. Now head of digital licensing Benelux, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment (Amsterdam, the Netherlands).  
*Effective: July 2015*

**Kai Schuppler**  
Full-time MBA 2014  
The head of process development for BITZER (Germany) moves to take on the position of general manager, BITZER Scroll Inc (Syracuse, NY, United States).  
*Effective: August 2015*

**Minco de Boer**  
Executive MBA 2012  
The senior manager of institutional business development/deputy CEO, ING Investment Management (Switzerland) takes up a new position as relationship manager institutional investors, Green City Energy AG (Munich, Germany).  
*Effective: July 2015*

**Prof. Roy Sembel**  
Full-time MBA 1990  
Has taken on the positions of independent commissioner, PT MNC Life Insurance (Jakarta, Indonesia) and dean of IPMI International Business School (Indonesia).  
*Effective: February 2015*

**Sofya Shuster**  
MSc Finance and Investments 2011  
Advances from the role of associate, Loan Syndications, ING Bank (UK) to become the department’s vice president.  
*Effective: April 2015*

**Yerlan Mukay**  
OneMBA 2013  
The one-time vice president of finance at Kazmunaygas takes on new challenges as business development and commerce director with Eurocopter Kazakhstan Engineering, a subsidiary of Airbus Helicopters Inc (Kazakhstan).  
*Effective: May 2015*

**Tobias. P. Taminiau**  
MSc Entrepreneurship & New Business Venturing 2006  
The former investment manager with Antea Participaties (the Netherlands) has become a partner with IRIS Corporate Finance (the Netherlands).  
*Effective: June 2015*

**Fred C. Sanders**  
Postkandidaats Bedrijfskunde Doctoraal 1986  
Successfully defended his dissertation and takes up the position of part-time senior fellow, researcher and lecturer, TSM Business School (the Netherlands).  
*Effective: December 2014*

**John Faye**  
Executive MBA 2007  
Formerly investment director, ABN AMRO Private Equity (The Netherlands). Now investment director, Temporis Capital LLP (London, UK).  
*Effective: January 2015*
Always wanted an RSM hoodie, mug, tie or bag? You can order a wide range of RSM branded items online!

Visit RSM’s online store and have your purchases delivered straight to your door.

WWW.STORE.RSM.NL

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**THE RSM STORE, NOW ONLINE!**

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**Rotterdam School of Management**

**Erasmus University**
EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW / MARIJN DEKKERS

TAking a Sensitive approach to LEADERSHIP
Russell Gilbert: You opened your keynote address at the RSM Leadership Summit by reflecting on the fact that the nature of leadership is changing for a variety of reasons. How and why is it changing?

Marijn Dekkers: Globalisation has changed leadership. There are a number of ways in which this has happened, so let me touch on three of the most important factors. First, you can no longer just do business in one country, and very few big companies do. If you come up with a good idea, it’s natural today to take it global. That means dealing with different countries and different cultures, and that has a major effect on leadership. At the same time, the more global you become the more diverse your own workforce becomes.

At Bayer, we traditionally had a lot of executives from Germany going to countries like Mexico and China where they’d take on top jobs there. In a world where having a very good sensitivity for local culture is essential if you want to succeed in local markets, that approach doesn’t work anymore. Instead, you have to bring up people from the countries you’re doing business in and train them internationally while making sure they become ready to take on top jobs in their homeland. For me, the need for cultural sensitivity is a very big part of why and how leadership is changing.

A second factor is that a lot of employees, and particularly younger ones, want to be intrapreneurs. We heard exactly that from the audience during the Q&A session following my presentation today: a number of people said they want to become social entrepreneurs, but to do it in the context of a big company. Today people have a very clear idea of what they want their work life to look like. They’re not so in tune with the “command and control” hierarchical management system where the boss tells them what to do every day. So how do you create space in an organisation for intrapreneurs? That requires a new approach to leadership.

The third factor is communication. Long gone are the days of top-down, one-way communication where the boss sends a letter to all employees telling them what’s happening in the company. The way we interact today – not just with employees, but also with external stakeholders – is so dynamic. With the internet, and especially with social media, news travels all over the world in a micro-second. That requires a lot of adaptation, particularly in more conventional business environments.

Relative to your comments about globalisation and the need for cross-cultural sensitivity, you said in a recent Harvard Business Review article that: ‘In a world where no one ever has a monopoly anymore, it isn’t about differentiating with a better aspirin. It is about a company’s ability to deeply build a profound affinity with a country – every country. That’s what being global means.’ Can you expand upon that?

I’d be glad to. Your affinity with a country has to be seamless – otherwise you cannot do business optimally in that
country. Countries no longer like it if a bunch of Western European business people just turn up and try to sell their stuff there, and nowadays that also includes China. Also, local people working for Western firms don’t like it if there is no obvious upward momentum in the organisation or if there is not enough sensitivity for local customs, culture and business needs.

This is a huge challenge in many ways. To touch on the point I made earlier, part of that challenge is to work out how you’re going to bring local employees up to speed in the organisation to such an extent that not only can they become leaders in their own country, but that they also have enough sensitivity to understand what it means to work for a global company – with all the complexities that involves, including having an affinity with headquarters.

It means you have to move people around to different parts of the world with the view that at some point they’ll return home to take up a leadership position. Taking this approach has become much more important than it was just 10 years ago. Back then the attitude was that the Chinese, for example, just needed to buy our products. Therefore whether you sold your products with a Chinese or German accent didn’t seem to make a difference. That’s not true anymore.

As well as looking to develop cultural diversity by growing leaders who have this deep cultural sensitivity, what is Bayer’s perspective on gender diversity in top positions? I ask as I’ve read that your approach towards leadership development is to bundle the issues of gender and culture together. How does this work?

Basically I don't want an environment where diversity is just about gender. It’s just as important to have diversity of thought and diversity of culture, and particularly the latter given all the countries the company works in. Instead of thinking of diversity as just being about gender, we
moved away to take a much broader perspective in which cultural diversity is just as important as gender diversity.

_Having said that, in your presentation you pointed out that Bayer had only just recently appointed the first woman to the executive board, something that’s taken the company 152 years to do. What do you say to critics who ask why it’s taken so long?_

I should explain that this appointment was to the management board, not the supervisory board, and there’s a big difference. As the name suggests, the supervisory board offers supervision, not accountability for our results. People on the management board, however, are very clearly accountable for results – financial targets, for example, which are easily measured. If a company doesn’t have female executives on its management board, the dumbest thing it can do is put someone in such a position prematurely and run the risk that it doesn’t work out.

I’ve been looking to develop a number of women for top positions for some time. Now the first one to come through the leadership pipeline has got the job because she’s really ready for it and not because that person is somehow more privileged because she’s female. It’s all about developing that pipeline. In fact, looking at the make up of the top 500 leaders in that pipeline only recently, the number of females in that group has risen from 7% to 16% in the last five years. It’s still not very high, but it’s much better than it was, and we’re making progress.

_The top 500 future leaders selected to be in this pipeline go through a mandatory process you call “Better Life Training”. How does that work and what is its purpose?_

Relative to our mission, we’re very good at science and the rationale, but we’re not always good at dealing with emotions.”

As a company our mission is “Science for a better life”. We come up with new molecules that do something positive – for the patients who look for healing, for the doctors who prescribe our drugs, for the farmers who cultivate our seeds. We are really very good at this – the science – and are convinced that what we do leads to a better life. But every drug has potential side effects; every crop-protection can be misapplied. It’s rare, but it happens. Therefore criticism of our “better life” products is always possible if you only emphasise the risks and ignore the benefits.

Our “Better Life Training” is about understanding the people who have criticisms and their arguments against what we do. Often these are emotional arguments and sometimes we get surprised by why people are against us. Relative to our mission, we’re very good at science and the rationale, but we’re not always good at dealing with emotions. A big leadership challenge for us then, is in making the “better life” aspect a more important part of our “Science for a better life” philosophy so that everybody understands it clearly.

The worst thing we could do is to develop a thick skin. If we did it would imply that we’re brushing off people’s fears. My view is that you have to be sensitive to their concerns because they are real and become much better at explaining the benefit-risk balance, for instance, by using storytelling to educate farmers on the use of pesticides.

It is important for leaders to listen, to have a perspective where all stakeholders and their interests are taken into account right from the beginning. Being sensitive to everyone’s needs is the best way to run a company in a long-term and sustainable way.
Being human is a leadership skill

This year, the annual RSM Leadership Summit shifted from addressing strategic issues facing business to the personal stories of three prominent business leaders who revealed the contents of their own “leadership survival kits”. Their stories were fascinating and moving.

STORY BY JUSTINE WHITTERN  PHOTOS CHRIS GORZEMAN/CAPITAL IMAGES

All three leaders shared a common thread in their stories: that effective communication with stakeholders – customers, employees, policy makers and society at large – is an essential part of leadership, as is being human, viewing the organisation as an outsider, and a willingness to accept criticism and adapting to new situations.

Outlining their personal perspectives on leadership were Marijn Dekkers of Bayer AG, Dorothee van Vredenburch of NN Group, and Merel van Vroonhoven of AFM. The RSM faculty members who joined them on stage at the summit backed the leaders’ experiences and explained the hard science of leadership and communication to the audience of around 500 business managers, students and the wider RSM community.

Leadership qualities are constantly challenged by external factors, but effective leaders must create positive environments, said Marijn Dekkers, chairman of the board of management of German pharmaceutical multinational Bayer AG. Dekkers was unfamiliar with typical German business practices when he joined Bayer after building his career in the USA. ‘When you enter a different environment as a CEO, do you turn things back to what you know? Or do you figure out how it’s done here and how you can adapt to it?’ he said.

Dekkers emphasised that feedback from colleagues and accepting criticism is important in order to be able to see other perspectives. Rob van Tulder, professor of international business-society management, agreed that being sensitive when entering an existing culture was a good approach to management. ‘It’s about thought leadership,’ he said.

Connecting emotionally

Dorothee van Vredenburch, member of the management board at international insurance and investment management company NN Group, identifies an emotional level of communication that connects with customers, employees and investors, and also an intuitive level where the “authenticity button” is housed. Her personal mission is to connect the purpose, the people and their performance. While important, assets that “don’t breathe” – such as spreadsheets and contracts – don’t inspire people, she said.

A leader’s survival kit, she explained, should include trust; instilling self-confidence that emboldens people to try new things so they co-operate instead of “sur-reptitiously attempting to bring projects down.” Fear drives people to spread negativity. ‘Maybe we think if we give other people self-confidence, then it will desert us, but the opposite is true. It helps you

Thus, the leaders shared their personal experiences and insights into what makes a successful leader. The RSM Outlook Winter 2015 edition includes a story by Justine Whitten, with photos by Chris Gorzeman/Capital Images.
to grow,’ she said. ‘People will forget what you say, but they will always remember how you made them feel.’

Merel van Vroonhoven, chair of the executive board at the Netherlands Authority for the Financial Markets (AFM) says her mission is to make connections and to provide autonomy; a balance that many leaders find difficult, but one which seems to be more easily found in voluntary organisations. She has learned how to see the world in new ways from her own family – particularly from her son who has autism – and from volunteer work.

Lucas Meijs, RSM’s professor of volunteering, civil society and businesses, and professor of strategic philanthropy, confirmed that effective business leaders aiming to create sustainable change need skills from civil society. ‘Volunteering experience can enhance your leadership skills,’ he said.

Van Vroonhoven addressed the students in the audience, saying a “zigzag career” would enrich their professional lives. ‘You’re at the beginning of your journey. My advice is to become “human”. Instead of hopping immediately into a new job and working stressfully in a corporate company, draw your inspiration from voluntary work,’ she said.

Joep Cornelissen, professor of corporate communication and management at RSM, reinforced the speakers’ recommendations to be authentic and to use storytelling to be convincing for customers, investors and employees. These skills, he says, are important at every stage of business – from an entrepreneur’s pitch to dealing with investors and right up to the boardroom.

The question-and-answer sessions, a unique feature of the RSM Leadership Summit, enabled the audience to dig deeper into the speakers’ personal stories. Appreciative feedback after the event highlighted the value of business leaders sharing such experiences, and also the opportunity to hear from female business leaders.

For full report of the RSM Leadership Summit visit WEB www.rsm.nl/summit
Excellence in business and a contribution to society are recognised annually with the RSM Distinguished Alumni Awards. Young and senior alumni who emphasise RSM’s four themes – sustainability, innovation, critical thinking and spirit – are chosen each year from the school’s more than 29,000 alumni globally. This year’s recipients help entrepreneurs start up innovative ventures, with a focus on improving business and society worldwide. They received their awards at the RSM Leadership Summit in October.

**Distinguished senior leader**

As a technology transfer officer at the European Space Agency (ESA), Niels Eldering (MSc in Management of Technology & Innovation 2003) [pictured left] supports more than 100 new start-ups annually through ESA’s Business Incubation Centres, which help entrepreneurs to exploit space-based solutions in more down-to-earth markets. Being nominated for his work – and for his involvement with RSM students through the organising of seminars since 2004 – Niels says he is honoured and excited about winning the award.

‘It’s important to give something back to RSM, and it feels natural to organise things for your alma mater,’ he says, adding that the seminars also function as a valorisation tool, resulting in a number of valuable business plans from students annually. ‘I show Europe’s future leaders today’s space technologies and they develop business ideas around what you can do with it to create economic and societal benefits.’

ESA has a top-class portfolio of technologies that can be applied to different solutions, and companies should invest and innovate in space, says Niels. ‘Entrepreneurs and students have innovative and problem-solving mindsets. It’s fantastic and refreshing to witness how these business students connect rocket science to business and society.’

Niels says giving back is also about receiving. ‘Don’t ask what your university can do for you. Ask what you can do for your university,’ he says, adding that it pays back because staying connected with RSM gives ESA unique access to young and talented future leaders. ‘With all the solutions for business and societal matters that need to be created, everyone can work together to build a better tomorrow.’

**Distinguished young leader**

Stef van Dongen (MSc in Business Society Management 2007) [pictured right] works towards an inclusive global economy with Enviu, which creates entrepreneurial ideas and ventures that address social and environmental issues worldwide. ‘There’s a lot to win from an inclusive society,’ says Stef. ‘Everyone, including the millions of people living in marginalised situations, has a talent. Society is missing out on huge potential when excluding people who don’t fulfil requirements that society thinks it needs from them.’
The alumnus says RSM taught him how to be innovative, set up companies, investigate unknown areas, and challenge himself. ‘We explore the new coordinates of the economy with the companies we set up. It gives my life meaning to do something I’m passionate about,’ he says.

After deciding which global issue should be addressed, Enviu looks at how to include local and global stakeholders into finding solutions. ‘Then we start making the impossible possible,’ says Stef, adding that what Enviu does should be mainstream. ‘Often we do things that have never been done before and we build partnerships nobody has thought of’ Stef hopes governments, NGOs and corporations will also discover these new ways of addressing societal problems. ‘Co-creation and entrepreneurship are key in this change. You can’t tackle these issues on your own. That’s why we set up innovative ventures.’

Winning the award feels great, says Stef. ‘It’s a recognition for our work, and I hope it inspires other entrepreneurs too.’ He says his relationship with RSM is important. ‘The school is an important networking partner; a pool of resources and knowledge. With RSM’s help, I can expand the boundaries of innovation and find new ways to do business.’

Stef plans to continue to find solutions for large societal challenges. ‘My dream is to keep developing these “kick-ass companies” and keep social entrepreneurship and innovation alive.’

The Distinguished Young Leaders
Josée van der Hoek (Executive MSc in Corporate Communication 2010)
Co-founder and consultant, Between-us
Himanshu Kachhwaha (Master in Financial Management 2009)
Founder and director, Veggiesaurus
Huib Lloyd (MSc in Human Resource Management 2007)
Director, Stichting Jarige Job
Stef van Dongen (MSc in Business Society Management 2007)
Founder and director, Enviu

The Distinguished Senior Leaders
Edwin Wenink (Doctoraal bedrijfswetenschappen 1995)
Manager supply chain, Flora Holland
Niels Eldering (MSc in Management of Technology & Innovation 2003)
Technology transfer officer, European Space Agency
Business and pleasure at alumni day

This year’s RSM Alumni Day was more than a nostalgic rekindling of connection between alumni and the school. Rather, future-facing topics such as international scalability for start-ups, the many faces of lean management, and the new business models engendered by entrepreneurship were presented during Alumni Day on October 3 2015 on the award-winning, restyled EUR campus.

STORY BY LESA SAWAHATA  PHOTOS  CHRIS GORZEMAN/CAPITAL IMAGES

The day began in the Erasmus Pavilion, the central point of the new campus, with 180 alumni of all RSM degree programmes (including graduates of MBA classes from 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010) gathered in the auditorium of the Pavilion to enjoy a welcome address from Dean Steef van de Velde. He noted that it was the school’s 45th alumni reunion and that 27 nationalities were represented in the room before giving an update about RSM’s activities, including its rising reputation and ranking in such reports as the Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities, in which RSM is number one in Europe in Business.

Cross-cultural business
Dean van de Velde turned over the podium to Adri Meijdam, executive director of BSc and MSc programmes. ‘At RSM we create our own “international laboratory” in which students learn the skills of cross-cultural management,’ he said, a clean segue into the two engaging presentations that followed: “Riding the Waves of Culture” by Professor Fons Trompenaars, based on his acclaimed book of the same name; and the practical insights of Victor van Tol, RSM alumnus and co-founder of the innovative start-up SnappCar, in his lecture “How can you expand your organisation internationally?” A funny, irreverent panel discussion chaired by Professor of Cross-Cultural Management Slawomir Magala ensued.

On a more sober note, the passing of Kristian Opsetmoen (MBA 1995) was recognised with a moving presentation by his classmate Michael Nick.

Open minds and open bar
The afternoon offered the assembled alumni many options, reflecting the diverse nature of the group – BSc, MSc and MBA alumni, and even “the Delftenaars”: the earliest graduates of what would become RSM, the Interfaculteit...
Ronald Eberhard, founder of The Lean Initiative. He shared his deep knowledge of the lean philosophy and laid out the way Lean Management, Kaizen, Six Sigma and other frameworks fit together and can be applied to speed change management in organisations.

Ferdinand Jaespers, programme director at the Erasmus Centre for Entrepreneurship, presented “Business model search”. Entrepreneurship is creating a fertile area for more traditional organisations looking to sharpen their business model, he said, and that ‘disruptive innovation is a completely new business model, and corporates can do it too.’

**Content + fun**

Alumna Cristina Saura Boza (MBA 2010) took advantage of the sunny October day to catch up with her former classmates on the terrace adjacent to Maria’s Cantina. ‘I joined the Leadership Summit yesterday, and it’s great that you get to listen to leaders from big organisations,’ she said. ‘My classmates and I are doing things we used to do here, like going to Hotel Bazar on the Witte de Withstraat. It’s great to share these memories – it’s the first time I’ve seen some of these people in five years!’

This is exactly what Joep Elemans, director of RSM Career, Corporate and Alumni Relations (CCAR), and an EMBA alumnus, wanted to create. ‘With the Leadership Summit on Friday and Alumni Day on Saturday, we aimed to offer an attractive combination of content plus fun to our alumni and corporate relations,’ he said.

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Bedrijfskunde (IB), which was located on the campus of Delft T/U between 1972 and 1983.

Harmen Bosch, who graduated with the (then) new academic degree Doctorandus in de Bedrijfskunde (Drs) in 1976, was seated with the other early adopters of the innovative IB programme at the VIP table during the lunch break. ‘The last time I attended, five years ago, I came into contact with people I hadn’t seen in years, and there was a real connection,’ he said. ‘I wanted to experience that sense of togetherness once again.’

While some alumni took the opportunity for intensive networking fuelled by beer, bitterballen and an open bar in Maria’s Cantina, others took advantage of the afternoon knowledge sessions. RSM’s career service manager, Irene Kroon, managed two lively sessions in which she demystified the sometimes-wonky landscape of LinkedIn, showing how to optimise online profiles for career builders.

Standing room only was an indication of the popularity of the session “Building exceptional organisations” by alumnus Harmen Bosch, who graduated with the (then) new academic degree Doctorandus in de Bedrijfskunde (Drs) in 1976, was seated with the other early adopters of the innovative IB programme at the VIP table during the lunch break. ‘The last time I attended, five years ago, I came into contact with people I hadn’t seen in years, and there was a real connection,’ he said. ‘I wanted to experience that sense of togetherness once again.’

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SAILING INTO UNCHARTED WATERS

Why pack in the security of a high-flying career in the international hydropower sector to set up your own sailing school from scratch? This is the watery course taken by RSM alumnus Christof Marti, a journey that has enabled him to pursue his greatest passion and find the job satisfaction sought by so many.

STORY BY KEVIN TITMAN
From the classroom studying engineering and finance to the boardroom devising business development plans for hydropower firms and on to circumnavigating the coastal islands of Vancouver. This might sound like a retirement dream with a happy ending in which someone gets to indulge in their favourite pastime on a full-time basis.

Not so for alumnus Christof Marti (Full-time MBA 2006), who took the life-changing career move of swapping the comfort of full-time employment for the more fraught venture of going solo and founding his own sailing school in Canada, a country he has called home for most of the past 15 years. Retirement is a long way off for this brave individual who, through his own efforts and sheer audacity, now finds himself satisfying his love for sailing – for a living.

The international bug
‘Maybe subconsciously I caught the bug to work in different countries and with different cultures during my RSM days,’ says Christof. ‘Not only was my time at Rotterdam memorable for how interactive it was in the classroom, with students all feeding off and learning from one another, but above all it was the ultimate international melting pot.’

After studying engineering in his native Switzerland, Christof had already been on the move before coming to Rotterdam, working and studying in his future home country of Canada and also operating as an engineering consultant in the Philippines. Duly equipped with his MBA, his next stop was Chile to advance his career in the hydropower business.

Start small, think big
After starting out as a consultant, a career in large international engineering firms beckoned. However, the seeds for Christof’s subsequent career switch were already sown, as he began to realise where his business heart lay. ‘It became obvious to me that I didn’t want to be a small cog in a giant company, plus I wanted to branch out from engineering in order to get into the more strategic, marketing and commercial aspects of business. Each time I changed company I sought out firms that were starting out small but had international expansion plans.’

Rocking the boat
In 2010 Simply Sailing came into being, initially just as a weekend project while Christof continued working full-time. After a brief hiatus in 2011 that Christof calls his “baby and boating period”, he decided to take the plunge and pursue more seriously the business idea that had been germinating.

With a three-year plan in place (including the requisite exit strategy, just in case) and enough financial backing to get started without the pressure of having to immediately bring in clients and an income, Christof was now running Simply Sailing on a full-time basis.

However idyllic it may sound to turn your favourite pastime into your job, for Christof sailing was no longer just a question of hitting the waters. ‘Although still today I manage to spend around 100 days on the water, from the moment I set up the company sailing became just one of the many aspects of my new working life. From one day to the next I could be handling the various instructors I subcontract to, devising an IT system, working on a commercial plan to rival with the more than 30 competitor schools we have here in Vancouver or just doing day-to-day maintenance on our fleet of boats. No two days at work resemble one another, but one thing’s a constant – sailing is now serious business as well as a pleasure.’

The three “Fs”
No entrepreneur can truly dip their toe into business creation without a certain amount of apprehension, which is why Christof insists so much on “the three Fs”. Based upon his own experience they are: fear, family, and finance. ‘I didn’t rush headlong into the decision I took. It was part of a long-running thought process. Part of the challenge is to go in without fear of failure. To do this, though, you’ll need some financial backup to begin with, as well as family to call upon if ever times get hard.’

So, is it really possible to go solo and be successful? ‘I learned very soon not to try to do everything by myself in a kind of cocoon. Sound out other people for their opinion, learn to delegate and hire early so you can spend your time and energy on what you do best! To be frank, depending upon your business venture, you’ve got to be prepared to earn next to nothing for up to three years, so make sure you create the best possible conditions for future success at the very start.’

Simply Sailing
www.simplysailing.ca
PASSIONATE ABOUT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Starting your own business is a major undertaking, one that requires innovative thinking, tireless enthusiasm and a deep commitment to achieving success. That’s certainly true for the alumni behind the ventures Novalogy, FoodWeLove and BitesWeLove.

Story by Tim Skelton

Novalogy
Novalogy is the company behind Ayo: intelligent light-therapy glasses that assist the wearer’s body clock. They can boost energy, overcome jetlag, and help those with disrupted sleep patterns.

The company’s co-founders, Bulgarian Aleksandar Dimitrov and Serbian Branislav Nikolic, met at RSM where they both studied for a Master in Strategic Entrepreneurship.

It was Branislav who hit on the concept, called EnWake. ‘I’m from a sunny country, and struggled with the gloomy Dutch winter, especially in the mornings,’ he says. He bought a Philips Wake-up Light, but this illuminates the entire room, disturbing other sleepers. They decided to try improving the concept, and the result is a personal device connected to a smartphone.

Branislav acknowledges RSM’s role in his journey. ‘The MSc programme was full of inspiring lectures. One great motivator was Professor Ferdinand Jaspers, who told us to “get out of the building” – meaning entrepreneurship is not about theory, but about being proactive, and searching for opportunities.’

The team entered EnWake into competitions, and reached the final three of RSM’s I WILL Award in 2014. They were also ranked among the three best Dutch start-ups by the Erasmus Centre for Entrepreneurship’s Get in the Ring competition.

In 2015, a new advanced solution was created called Ayo. To develop this the partners started a new company, Novalogy, and were joined by an old friend, Nikola Vucinic. ‘With EnWake we had a great vision, but we missed the freedom and capabilities to make it reality,’ Branislav says. ‘Nikola has extensive software development knowledge. He resigned from a top IT company to help us bring Ayo to the market.’

Ayo’s launch is being crowdfunded. ‘We’ve raised over €120,000 and got orders from 50 countries,’ Branislav says. They attracted interest from people from the worlds of travel, entertainment, medical services and professional sport. ‘Preparing the campaign was hard work, but luckily we were selected in the Hot in Hardware category by Indiegogo. For a while Ayo was a top trending technology project.’

The team hopes to send Ayo to their backers in December, with a full release planned in 2016. ‘But developing an advanced wearable technology takes time, effort, money and talent – things can easily get complicated,’ Branislav admits.

So what has he learned? ‘I think one major lesson is to expect the unexpected, learn to be flexible, and adapt to new situations – challenges can also be opportunities,’ he says. ‘And surround yourself with people you trust and can rely on – it can make or break your start-up.’

WEB www.novalogy.io
WEB www.goayo.com
**FoodWeLove & BitesWeLove**

FoodWeLove and BitesWeLove are two online food companies. The first sends monthly gourmet food boxes to subscribers, the second offers healthy snacks.

What the two have in common is both were conceived by RSM alumnus Marleen Basart (pictured). Marleen graduated in 2008, with an MSc in International Management that included the international CEMS (Community of European Management School) programme.

After graduating, she worked for Albert Heijn, first as a trainee category manager, then as a store manager. ‘As I’d followed the CEMS programme it was assumed I’d end up working for a multinational, but instead I got a job with a very Dutch company,’ she says.

At Albert Heijn, Marleen learned about dealing with suppliers, so the next step was easy. ‘I launched FoodWeLove in 2012. We still have suppliers, but instead of just seeking the lowest price from them I wanted to take an idealistic view, helping them build their brands.’

The idea came from the Beautybox subscription service. ‘I wasn’t into make-up, and I’d grown up in a family where food was very important. So I decided to try something similar with gourmet food,’ she says.

She also had a ready-made story for the media. ‘I was young and from a large corporation, and we work with famous chefs,’ she says. ‘But I was also fortunate. I had a good PR guy, so we got into a lot of magazines.’

BitesWeLove, launched in 2014, has a more commercial slant. ‘The customer base is different,’ Marleen says. ‘FoodWeLove appeals to foodies, but BitesWeLove has a wider appeal among people interested in lifestyle and health.’

Marleen agrees that RSM’s role was invaluable. ‘Studying at international level I met people from many places,’ she says. ‘We exchanged ideas, and this made me more open as a person. That in turn helps with suppliers. It helps you come across as enthusiastic and passionate, and receptive to feedback.’

There have been a few difficulties along the way. ‘One thing RSM doesn’t teach you is how to manage people,’ Marleen says. ‘We have a team working for us now, and it’s a real learning curve.’

Both brands are growing. FoodWeLove is about to relaunch with more emphasis on food gift boxes, rather than subscriptions. And BitesWeLove is expanding into Belgium, and into the corporate sector. ‘But you need money to build a consumer brand,’ Marleen admits. As a result, the near future also involves fundraising.

Are there more ideas in the pipeline? ‘We launched BitesWeLove very soon after FoodWeLove,’ Marleen says. ‘For a time there wasn’t enough focus on one thing. So for now, two companies is enough.’

**WEB**  [www.foodwelove.nl](http://www.foodwelove.nl)

**WEB**  [www.biteswelove.nl](http://www.biteswelove.nl)
THE RISE OF
THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

With governments in retreat but social problems on the march, a growing number of socially focused entrepreneurs are looking for ways to use the profit motive to create sustainable social benefits. **Story by Bennett Voyles**

**At present, social enterprises are a small but rapidly growing sector in the economy. In the Netherlands alone, such organisations now represent €476 million of turnover and employ 11,000 people. Between 2013 and 2015, they experienced a 24 per cent increase in revenue and a 36 per cent rise in employment, according to the 2015 Social Enterprise Monitor published by SocialEnterpriseNL.**

This is not even under especially advantageous conditions. In the United States and the United Kingdom, two markets where the tax regime offers advantages to social enterprises, such businesses are growing even faster, according to Rob van Tulder, professor in international business-society management at RSM.

Whether social entrepreneurs launch their companies as standalone organisations or as part of a partnership that pools the resources of public, private, profit and non-profit institutions, the social entrepreneur's strategy involves bringing all of society's resources to bear to solve a social or environmental problem, says Prof. Van Tulder.

Like conventional companies, social enterprises try to be profitable – not for the founders to get rich quick, but because profit is the only way to stay in business indefinitely without relying on a subsidy. ‘Only profitable social enterprises can have a long-term, sustainable impact on society,’ Prof. Van Tulder explains.

Social enterprises differ from traditional philanthropy not in their aims, but in their organisation. ‘Most philanthropic organisations linked to companies are not linked to their core business;’ he says. ‘Social enterprises do the opposite: they aim at societal impact through their value proposition, organisation, and the products and services they offer.’

**Three factors**

Lucas Meijs, professor of volunteering, civil society and businesses, and professor of strategic philanthropy at RSM, argues that three factors distinguish the truly social enterprise: who gets the profits, who makes the decisions,
and how personally connected stakeholders feel to its success.

“What I think defines a social enterprise is not the profits as such but how the profit is spread around,” Prof. Meijs says. “We like Uber as a kind of new social enterprise in the sharing economy until we find out that the profit only goes to California. If the profit were divided more equally between the once-in-a-while taxi drivers and Uber, then we’d accept it as a kind of social enterprise. Once we find the profit ends up in Silicon Valley, however, then the whole lingo of the sharing economy and all the blah, blah, blah of the social enterprise is gone.”

The structure of the organisation is a third consideration, in Prof. Meijs’ view. ‘As soon as a traditional organisational structure leads to a kind of ownership which is very centralised, with economic ownership in one shareholder, it works as long as it’s a benevolent shareholder – but what happens if the company is sold?’ he asks. It took Ben & Jerry’s, the American ice-cream company, several years to recover its reputation after its sale to Unilever, Prof. Meijs points out – and that was mostly because Unilever really started caring about its social and sustainable actions.

A final distinguishing factor: the number of people who are passionate about the enterprise. ‘Really, what sets the social enterprise apart from many companies is that so many people are emotionally attached to the organisation,’ he says.

This means that communication is a key part of social entrepreneurship. ‘You really need to understand that many of your supporters will feel emotional ownership in the enterprise. As the organiser of the community, you also need to talk to them, as a dialogue. You cannot afford just to send them messages,’ Prof. Meijs advises. ‘If you see them just as customers, you’re lost.’

Social partnerships also demand special efforts at communication. Prof. van Tulder notes that governments and non-profit entities sometimes have a hard time moving beyond their traditional roles. In the Netherlands, for instance, the Dutch government has difficulty acting as a true partner rather than simply as a subsidy provider, and non-profits have a hard time seeing the government as more than a chequebook. ‘Both sides need to invest in each other,’ he says.

In the Parttime Master Bedrijfskunde, the Dutch-language management education programme at RSM, one key insight that students learn is to recognise that business and society aren’t enemies. ‘Companies and society are not opposed to each other,’ says Klaas Wassens, the executive director of the programme. ‘Companies are part of society.’

“...what sets the social enterprise apart from many companies is that so many people are emotionally attached to the organisation.” Prof. Lucas Meijs

Rob van Tulder is professor in international business-society management, academic director of the Partnerships Resource Centre and founder of the department of business-society management at RSM. EMAIL rtulder@rsm.nl

Lucas Meijs is professor of volunteering, civil society and businesses, and professor of strategic philanthropy at RSM. EMAIL lmeys@rsm.nl
Go into business or serve humanity? Until recently, this was often seen as an either/or choice. But the career of RSM alumna Alba Tiley suggests that it is increasingly possible to do both – and maybe even necessary.

Story by Bennett Voyles

Alba Tiley, a 2010 graduate of RSM with an MSc in Business Administration, now serves as the United Nations world food programme partnership co-ordinator for DSM, the Dutch multinational life and materials sciences company.

Her work is somewhat similar to that of business development executives – hammering out complex deals with multiple players, then making sure that everyone delivers on their promises. The difference is that, unlike a traditional business development officer, profit is only one of Alba’s goals.

‘I think that what’s really interesting about public-private partnerships is that you’re trying to create value for a much broader group of stakeholders, which makes it a lot more challenging but also more interesting, because you have to weigh and balance so many different factors,’ says Alba, a winner of the RSM Distinguished Alumni Award.

Her most recent assignment: bringing more than 70 Dutch public, private and governmental organisations together to commit to the United Nation’s post-2015 sustainable development goals, a document she believes will serve as the blueprint for international development over the next two decades.

Helping society

Since she first became interested in public-private partnerships as a student at RSM, Alba says she has seen growing recognition that the private sector can and should play a role in helping to resolve societal challenges. ‘It’s becoming more and more recognised and accepted that the private sector has a role to play in development issues or in sustainability issues,’ she says.

Although some are sceptical about the involvement of business in things like the UN’s sustainable development charter, she says, there is more recognition now that business brings special qualities to the table that can help non-governmental organisations meet their challenges faster. ‘I think in business you have a great capacity for innovation; you have,
sometimes, greater financial resources; you have the ability to move much more swiftly,’ she says.

In the past five years the Canadian, from Ottawa, says she has learned a number of lessons about how to make such collaborations work. ‘The closer you get to your own backyard, the better the collaboration is. Gone are the days of pure philanthropy where a company simply handed over a cheque to a worthy cause. That really doesn’t resonate with what they do, what their expertise is, what their added value is, what their employees are interested in,’ she says. ‘Stay close to what you know.’

The early discussions in a partnership are very important, she believes. ‘I think what’s really important from the start is that you have a very open dialogue, because you really need to build the trust to be able to sustain that relationship,’ Alba says. In her experience, most partnerships succeed or fail because particular individuals have built strong personal relationships between the companies.

**Partnership broker**

Although knowledge about such partnerships is still limited compared to academic understanding about for-profit partnerships, she says a number of organisations, including the United Nations, now produce case studies and academic research.

Alba says that her role is also being increasingly recognised as a distinct profession. People in her position even have a professional organisation now, the Partnership Brokers Association, an international body for people who develop and manage partnerships between business, government and civil society groups.

Blended careers such as hers are becoming increasingly common, she says. ‘I think that young people have very broad interests these days. I think it’s becoming more accepted that you can have a career that isn’t just in one sector – not just in the public service or not just in a corporation,’ she says.

In addition to Tiley’s day job working on the UN initiative, she also volunteers in the World Economic Forum’s Global Shapers programme, an international network of young private and public sector leaders who collaborate to tackle social challenges head-on. ‘Collaboratively we work on different projects to improve the state of the world,’ she says.

> "...what’s really interesting about public-private partnerships is that you’re trying to create value for a much broader group of stakeholders...” Alba Tiley

have a very open dialogue, because you really need to build the trust to be able to sustain that relationship,’ Alba says. In her experience, most partnerships succeed or fail because particular individuals have built strong personal relationships between the companies.

Some of the Global Shapers have gone on to start some very interesting social enterprises, she says. One she likes in particular is a company called True Price, which measures the cost of a product’s externalities, such as pollution. ‘These are factors that are not considered when coming up with the price of a product but are ultimately borne by society anyway,’ she says.

In the next few years, Alba sees more organisations combining the characteristics of for-profit and not-for-profit organisations. ‘Perhaps one day we’ll see spin-offs of corporations and NGOs creating independent entities, for example. That could be quite interesting.’

More information about the United Nations world food programme can be found at www.wfp.org
EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

What do you get when you combine a social conscience and a pragmatic business sense with a quietly indomitable spirit? You get Namita Taneja Krul, RSM graduate (MSc Business Administration 2010) and nominee for the 2014 RSM Distinguished Alumni Award. Here Namita talks about her social enterprises WORK+SHELTER and New Yardsticks and the passion within that compels her to help those less fortunate.  

Namita is the co-founder of a multi-pronged programme that has proved over the last five years that sound business principles can be effectively applied to social enterprise. Unlike traditional business approaches, the metrics of success used by Namita’s programme go beyond the purely financial. ‘I was visiting a family in India and the father proudly told me that his eldest child attended school. This child was eight years old but looked four. My god, I thought, how can I provide vocational training to a malnourished family? How can they learn without a decent meal a day? Brain cells need food,’ she says. This is a vital point; it illustrates the interdependency between multiple factors that must be addressed to alleviate poverty and empower people at the grass-roots level. Addressing these complex elements in a single place, with a comprehensive programme, is precisely what WORK+SHELTER does.

Creating opportunities
At its core, WORK+SHELTER provides marginalised women in India with vocational skills and the means to provide themselves and their families with the basic human requirements of food, shelter and safety. However the programme goes beyond simply holding a few classes to teach skills that may or may not be useful in the wider world. WORK+SHELTER partners with businesses across the Netherlands and the United States, fulfilling manufacturing orders, offering an ethical manufacturing solution for businesses, and creating opportunities for the women served by WORK+SHELTER.

Companies that support social enterprise are lining up to use the skills of WORK+SHELTER’s workforce and it’s proving so advantageous for all that immediate expansion is needed. ‘To expand, to provide training to 100 marginalised women over the coming year, we need seed money,’ she says. ‘I would love to get support and resources from multinational businesses like Ikea!’

Namita’s soft-spoken demeanour and easy humour are at odds with her sharp business acumen and privileged background. The Australian-born daughter of an Indian diplomat, Namita could easily have trodden the well-worn linear path of graduation, career and family that many have walked before her. Instead she took the road less travelled, moving across career paths in widely varying business verticals with barely a blink.

Insatiably curious by nature and a global citizen by nurture, Namita is frank about her feeling of obligation to those less fortunate: ‘I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth. That means I have a responsibility. Why did I choose to help marginalised Indian women? Because I could have been one.’

Social returns
Similar programmes with potential partnerships between successful companies and local
Why did I choose to help marginalised Indian women? Because I could have been one.”

Namita Taneja Krul

NGOs in India are screened by New Yardsticks, the first enterprise spearheaded by Namita. New Yardsticks is named for what Muhammad Yunus, the grandfather of micro-lending for social enterprise, described when he talked about a new set of metrics for business success; metrics that measure social return on investment and go beyond only financial profitability.

The company uses a combination of Social Return on Investment and the 5A model set forth in Namita’s Master thesis. These standards assess a potential project before inception as well as a project’s impact, based on its marketability, accessibility to all stakeholders, and with a strong focus on risk management.

‘There is an orphanage in India that had space for expansion. The children were happy – actually happy, in an orphanage! But the managers were worried about what would happen when the older children turned eighteen. They were also looking for ideas on how to use the space they had for expansion,’ she says.

‘After screening the possibilities I recommended that they build a construction company and utilise the resources they already have – teach the older children the practical skills they need to become engineers, architects, carpenters and administrators. Make a test case from the construction company that builds on your expansion space. Create the jobs, teach the skills.’

Doing more
And herein lies the crux of Namita Taneja Krul’s philosophy and proven model. ‘If you start a centre to train these women, it’s not enough to just give the training. You must have a constant flow of orders. If you just give skills but don’t do anything with those skills then nothing happens. A set of distribution channels creates jobs and jobs create returns (beyond traditional ways of measuring success).

‘You can’t just sit behind a sewing machine; you must have an order to fill. And when you have this you have a peer group. You have a network, a social group. When we created WORK+SHELTER and one woman was in hospital, the other women helped her – they took care of her family, they helped her recover,’ she says.

‘You give a person a skill and you can say, “yes, I gave her financial empowerment”. But if you also give her a safe place, nourishment, friends, a peer group, goals, and escape from abuse at home... then you can also say you have created a social return. These are the new yardsticks of social entrepreneurship.’

To support Namita’s work and develop or create sustainable partnerships that will expand her reach to empower thousands of marginalised women in India, please contact her and her team at EMAIL info@workshelter.org or info@newyardsticks.nl

WEB http://newyardsticks.nl
WEB http://workshelter.org

Keely Robin Bates, German/British, Student, BSc International Business Administration (IBA)
Six years ago Murvin Chan had a choice between accepting a secure position within local government and taking up the more stressful option of joining the crisis management and disaster response department the Netherlands Red Cross. Six years on and he finds himself in the midst of the current refugee crisis, with he and his colleagues managing operations out of The Hague.

In a typical year Murvin will be called upon once or twice to go into the field and try to solve a crisis in the heat of the action. This was notably the case for him in 2010 when the infamous Icelandic volcanic ash cloud swept across Europe and caused travel chaos, meaning emergency shelter had to be found for 2,000 of the 10,000 people stranded at Schiphol Airport.

It is especially at times like these that an NGO needs to be run like a tight ship. ‘Our work may not be considered to be business in the traditional sense but you’ve got to stay focused and professional. It’s for this reason I have been working these past 3-4 years on developing a national model for dispensing medical care in crisis situations, so we can identify which wounded can be dealt with by the Red Cross and the severer cases that require professional treatment. Adopting a more business-like approach is the way forward’.

**Business partnering**

In his time so far at the Red Cross Murvin has observed a rising trend of private businesses wanting to team up with NGOs, not by simply stumping up the cash required to fund humanitarian initiatives but by contributing in the form of expertise and supplies. ‘There was a time when NGOs may have gone cap in hand to businesses in search of a cash injection. Those days are gone, for a number of reasons,’
begins Murvin. ‘For starters, not all businesses necessarily have the budget. If they do, they want to know when, why and on what their money will be spent. It’s for this reason that we are seeing more and more partnerships set up, where resources and know-how are offered, rather than actual money passing hands’.

**Learning to collaborate**

Murvin has seen the likes of Capgemini offering consulting and project management skills for the Red Cross’ flood victim relief service. P&G make available a whole line of its products in support of the current Syrian refugee situation and companies such as Hansaplast and Helly Hansen striking up deals to reduce the costs for the Red Cross in being duly equipped for the many money-sapping operations in which they are involved.

The ongoing refugee crisis has made the coordination challenges that face Murvin every day even stiffer. The flow of action and response is constant, as is the will to intervene in support of the victims of the situation. “Normal” working days go out of the window, as well as the notion of a weekend.

However, Murvin has no regrets about opting for such a working environment and career and, with the support of business experts, sees an increasingly positive future:

‘When the Red Cross first came knocking I could have stayed in a much cosier situation in local government but I was determined to make a positive impact on society,’ he says.

‘The fact that I can now apply my business knowledge in a good cause and see the Red Cross deploy the expertise of companies that want to make a difference beyond just financial shows the mutual benefits of social partnerships. If this isn’t already being done on a general scale, I hope it will be soon.’

For more information about Netherlands Red Cross, visit [WEB www.rodekruis.nl](http://www.rodekruis.nl)

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**For more information about Netherlands Red Cross, visit [WEB www.rodekruis.nl](http://www.rodekruis.nl)**
Celebrating 20 years of impact

RSM’s René de Koster has earned his reputation as a world leader in the field of material handling among both academics and industry practitioners. This year marks De Koster’s 20th anniversary as a full professor at RSM, an achievement most worthy of recognition.

When René de Koster embarked on his PhD some 30 years ago, he was one of a handful of academics conducting research into logistics optimisation. The field of logistics was in its nascent phase and the subject of material handling the focus of a select few academics worldwide.

Today logistics is a standard topic taught and researched in almost every business school in the world. Material handling has claimed its place within the field as an important research stream. While Prof. De Koster is quick to point out the many individuals who have contributed to its development, the extent of his own contribution to both fields is beyond question.

De Koster’s name comes up as the author of the earliest dated published paper in the Netherlands on warehouse processes. Many academics in the field credit him as the driving force behind the emergence of the material handling field, going as far back as his PhD.

‘René’s pioneering work during his PhD spurred on many other researchers, including myself,’ says Professor Ivo Adan of Eindhoven University of Technology. ‘Since then, a huge body of literature has appeared on this topic leading to tools that have been successfully applied in many production environments.’
A passion for relevance
That logistics and material handling were such neglected areas of academic research within the Netherlands only 30 years ago still surprises Prof. De Koster. ‘A substantial part of the Netherlands’ gross domestic product is generated from material handling,’ he says. ‘Yet hardly anyone was studying or teaching it.’

Prof. De Koster determined to change that, but first he wanted to know the industry from a practitioner’s perspective. He spent seven years as a logistics consultant after completing his PhD, an experience that spurred a passion for industry relevance in research and teaching.

René is by far the best Dutch professor in the broad area of logistics and supply chain – and one of the best worldwide.”
— Prof. Steef van de Velde, dean of RSM

A great source of inspiration for him, he says, was Kevin Gue, now a professor at the University of Louisville in the US. Kevin started the ‘personal impact index’ for measuring the impact of research in practice,’ says Prof. De Koster. ‘I said, “Wow let’s do that!”’

Soon after he joined RSM in 1995, De Koster started a course in Warehouse Management, the first of its kind at RSM. He encouraged his students to do internships in companies. Professor Iris F.A. Vis, a former PhD student of De Koster’s, says: ‘René’s emphasis on relevance continues to influence how I teach my own PhD students today.’

His approach to teaching won him awards – and continues to do so. In both 2013 and 2015, his students were winners of the Dutch Master’s Thesis prize and in 2014 of the Smartport thesis award.

In his research, Prof. De Koster collaborated extensively with the sector organisation BMWT as a means of connecting with industry. Over the coming decades he published 130 papers and eight books, winning numerous academic awards. His article on warehouse order picking (2007) is today the most cited article on the subject in the world.

One of his most important academic collaborations was with Prof. Yugang Yu, now executive dean at the University of Science and Technology of China, who describes De Koster as his ‘most important and inspiring research partner’. Together they published 20 papers and worked on such high-profile projects as NWO VENI and KNAW-CAS. Another is Debjit Roy, an associate professor at the Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad, with whom he has published 15 academic papers.

Most of his projects have involved collaborations with companies, using their data and designing proposals for improvements. De Koster eventually formalised this interaction with the creation of the Material Handling Forum, a platform for the regular exchange of information between academics and practitioners and an initiative that has proven to be a game-changer in terms of opening communication channels between science and practice.

The ultimate virtuous circle
The highlights of his career, says Prof. De Koster, have been when his research has made an impact. A good example, he says, has been his research on warehouse safety in the Netherlands.

After being asked to chair Prize Safest Warehouse, Prof. De Koster initiated a large-scale research project that used data from dozens of companies to determine the most accurate criteria for evaluating leadership in warehouse safety. This method is now used by the Prize Safest Warehouse Awards.

‘From this research came the first way in which companies in the Netherlands could benchmark their warehouses in terms of safety,’ he says. ‘Today companies want to compete and participate in these awards. That’s very rewarding, to see research go from practice to research to practice again.’

But Prof. De Koster remains humble about this achievement. ‘Let’s say that I have been able to help a tiny little bit in making warehouses safer. I have a maga-
A motivated workforce is easier to manage, and is therefore more productive. This might seem to be something of a truism but even a brief conversation with RSM’s Prof. Daan van Knippenberg (pictured bottom right) provides enough evidence to indicate that senior executives can easily lose sight of such a basic tenet of management.

Van Knippenberg, who is professor of organisational behaviour at RSM and chair of the school’s department of organisation and personnel management, suggests that while senior management can reasonably be expected to have a crystal-clear view of what comprises a company’s business strategy, they can often make the mistake of not communicating that strategy effectively to fellow workers further down the corporate hierarchy.

If workers do not know what the overriding goals are, how they should be achieved and why they are meaningful for the company in the first place, then how can workers be expected to play an effective role in achieving the goals?

Or, to put it another way, and to use a sporting analogy, if two athletes have been entered into a three-legged race, but one of them thinks they are throwing the javelin while the other thinks they are doing the high jump, there will be negative consequences.

The European single currency project represents a more elevated large-scale politico-macroeconomic example of misalignment. As different countries had different objectives in mind when they signed up for it, it is hardly surprising that it has run into some well-documented difficulties. “The misalignment of goals leads to a misalignment of effort and therefore sub-optimal outcome,” says Prof. Van Knippenberg.
**Scanning for solutions**

Having identified and explained the problem of misalignment, Prof. Van Knippenberg offers a solution that can be customised to meet the individual needs of companies and other institutions. S-ray Diagnostics is a joint venture limited company, with Erasmus University Rotterdam as a shareholder. It combines Prof. Van Knippenberg’s managerial expertise with that of Patrick Groenen (a professor at ESE considered a world-class statistician) and Marco de Haas (pictured top), a PhD and entrepreneur who is the company’s chief executive officer.

A major clue to the company’s methods lies in its very name. As an X-ray shows the internal structure of the human body, so S-ray makes the internal structure of an organisation visible. Replace X with S, for strategy, and you arrive at S-ray.

‘The S-ray Scan is the tool used to tackle strategic misalignment in an organisation, enabling us to show the extent to which there is a shared understanding of strategy,’ says Prof. Van Knippenberg. ‘We can see how organisational behaviour affects that shared understanding.’

‘Strategy is set at the top management level by people who have possibly discussed it for several months,’ he continues. ‘Everyone involved thinks it’s agreed and understood but they don’t appreciate the importance of communicating the strategy clearly to the workforce.’

The closer an employee is to the top, the more that employee will understand the strategy and align behaviour accordingly. The further down the company one is employed, the less understanding there is.

**Finding alignment**

The scan consists of three distinct components. Together these provide a state-of-the-science tooling and the expertise necessary to realign the entire company. Step one helps senior management capture their company’s strategy in a set of focused statements. Step two creates a clear picture of strategic alignment throughout the organisation. Step three provides the key alignment drivers to resolving strategic misalignment. Where there is alignment there will be harmony and a productive workforce.

De Haas describes S-ray’s work as the appliance of science. ‘We make science work, and we make it work profitably,’ he says. He also takes great pains to stress that the company is emphatically not a strategy consultancy. ‘We make no value judgement on a client’s strategy. Our focus is to measure whether or not they have achieved alignment.’ Interestingly, he adds that it is better to have an inferior strategy with a high level of alignment than a superior strategy with poor alignment.

The process works by helping to translate a company’s strategy into statements setting out key strategic priorities, says Prof. Van Knippenberg. ‘We then ask people via an online portal to rank those priorities to see if they are pulling together. Their responses help us build a picture of the extent of agreement or disagreement.’

Each team is portrayed as a bubble on a radar-type of screen. The bigger the bubble, the more agreement there is within the team – the smaller the bubble, the less the agreement. Distance between bubbles has meaning too: the closer together they are, the greater the agreement between teams. In an ideal world, the bubbles would all be big and close together, centred around the bubble of the top executive team. ‘But that’s not what we find,’ says Prof. Van Knippenberg. ‘Especially in a baseline measurement, the bubbles are all over the place.’

‘We help by mapping out the reality of the current situation, always using the same model but tailoring it to the individual company and its strategy. We pinpoint the areas of misunderstanding and prescribe appropriate curative action, which the company can decide to implement or not. Once we can show top management what the reality is, however, they see that it makes sense.’

We make science work, and we make it work profitably.”

Marco de Haas, CEO, S-ray Diagnostics

More information about S-ray Diagnostics can be found at [WEB www.s-raydiagnostics.com](http://www.s-raydiagnostics.com)
Targeted training builds strategy success

Adapting to meet ever-changing real-world circumstances in business is integral to RSM’s success as a provider of customised education programmes. The school’s expertise in this area is vividly illustrated by recent work carried out at the behest of Deutsche Telekom.

STORY BY BRIAN BOLLEN

Developing an existing relationship with one of the world’s best-known telecommunications companies, RSM created and delivered two customised training programmes which were designed specifically to complement Deutsche Telekom’s own established programme of in-house academy training.

“The fiercely competitive nature of the international telecoms market has created a situation in which educational budgets are being targeted more carefully,” says Hans Horstink, a long-standing education specialist and RSM’s director of custom programmes.

Companies for which the RSM might previously have run a full MSc programme are discovering that there are broader options available to them, he says. Deutsche Telekom, for example, operates in an extremely challenging market, which has become less profitable as the regulatory environment has forced the revision of previously lucrative tariffs. This, combined with other factors, has led the company to review its employee training philosophy, placing a greater emphasis on day-to-day commercial realities.

Real-world training

Branislav Hosek, Bonn-based senior expert of group performance development at Deutsche Telekom, says: ‘We had one programme with RSM that led to a degree [Executive Master in accounting and financial management, a full MSc], but it took three years to complete and in today’s climate [where job mobility is the norm rather than the exception] that is just too long. We need shorter, more targeted training to meet business demands; two- to three-day seminars run in a blended format with pre-reading and follow-up are the way of the future, delivering more modules to more people more often,’ he says.

‘As we have a history of co-operation with RSM dating back several years, it was logical to ask the school to provide us with an up-to-date and state-of-the-art module focused on strategy for dif-
ferent target groups, covering strategy development, strategy implementation and related topics. We wanted it to focus on the realities and practicalities that face Deutsche Telekom in its everyday life, but to have an academic perspective,' he explains.

He also emphasises that the best possible output for the investment was very much a goal as the relationship between supplier and customer evolved. RSM created two two-day workshops on strategy for managers: one focused on strategy development, the other on strategy implementation. Both using the “flipped classroom” design and both workshops have now run several times.

‘In a flipped design we ask the participants to study at their own pace by doing some preparation in advance: reading articles, watching documentaries and interviews online, with small quizzes to test if the knowledge has been absorbed and do small assignments to find out what actual problems they meet in their day-to-day work,’ Horstink explains.

‘The course itself can then be used to back that up and reinforce the learning that has already taken place. This means we have fewer lectures and more workshops, making much more effective use of classroom time. Later Deutsche Telekom approached us again, with a request to create a short programme to help streamlining and unify its strategy units around the globe,’ he says.

‘While the company obviously has a single overarching global strategy in pursuit of its corporate aims, local units have traditionally enjoyed a high degree of autonomy in adapting to local markets.’

**Strategic community**

This has almost inevitably generated tension between global and local aspirations and practices, and Deutsche Telekom decided it was time to ease those tensions. ‘The thinking was that we could work with Deutsche Telekom to help them formulate common methods and strategic approaches,’ says Horstink.

‘This could pave the way to the creation of a “strategy community” within the company, rather than have a series of specialists working individually around the globe.’

RSM created a further one-time two-day workshop for strategy specialists as part of a larger programme created by Deutsche Telekom itself. A new element in the programme for these specialists was a series of four short research workshops during lunches and coffee breaks. In these, four RSM faculty members talked about their research findings and subsequently discussed their experiences with the group.

‘It was very intense,’ says Johannes Kitz, senior manager, group strategy at Deutsche Telekom headquarters in Bonn. He has responsibility for the company mergers and acquisitions strategy, the most recent major manifestation of which was the sale of EE to BT in the UK. ‘But I enjoyed the course very much, as one of several two-day modules in Deutsche Telekom’s training programme.

We covered a great deal of ground in two days, and there was a lot to take away and reflect on afterwards. When I go back to my notes there is always something new to emerge, reminding me how we can learn from the examples of other industries in areas such as innovation,’ he says.

‘Deutsche Telekom has concerns about innovation and how its own approach to the subject compares with smaller, nimbler companies. Talking about strategy in a non-M&A context has helped me appreciate how we might be able to find alternative solutions in other sectors,’ he says.

Even though strategy is an abstract concept, the effectiveness of which can be difficult to measure in terms of enhancing the company’s profitability, Branislav Hosek concludes by stating that: ‘Deutsche Telekom’s international

> Deutsche Telekom’s international strategists are now working more closely together and they seem to understand the corporate strategy better than before.”

> Branislav Hosek, senior expert, group performance development, Deutsche Telekom

strategists are now working more closely together and they seem to understand the corporate strategy better than before.’

RSM’s Horstink sums it up by saying: ‘Learning about and debating approaches to issues that the participants can relate to, with people from other backgrounds, such as our own researchers, is very inspiring. We will certainly deploy this approach more often in future assignments as we continue to evolve and modernise our teaching methods. And I’m happy to report that Deutsche Telekom have commissioned further workshops.’

Information about RSM’s customised programmes can be found at www.rsm.nl/customised
Heb je ervaring maar wil je meer uit je carrière halen? Studeer dan bedrijfskunde naast je baan. Start op 8 september 2016 met de avondopleiding Parttime Master Bedrijfskunde aan de beste business school van Nederland.

- Tweejarige deeltijd masteropleiding in het Nederlands
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**Meer informatie op:** [WWW.RSM.NL/PARTTIME-BEDRIJFSKUNDE](http://WWW.RSM.NL/PARTTIME-BEDRIJFSKUNDE)
FORTHCOMING EVENTS

17 DECEMBER
CALLING MARKETING PROFESSIONALS
Discover how the financial crisis and economic recovery has shaped ING’s marketing strategy over the past five years at the RSM Alumni Affinity Group event. Join ING’s head of global brand management Nanne Bos at ING’s head office in Amsterdam on Thursday 17 December. [WEB www.rsm.nl/affinitygroups or contact Meta Mikec EMAIL mmikec@rsm.nl]

2016 & ONGOING

JANUARY
YEAR-ROUND RECRUITMENT
The largest annual on-campus recruitment event in Europe takes place at RSM from 27 January – 10 February; 2,500 students and 100 companies participate in the Erasmus Recruitment Days. Or meet potential future employees via the online Erasmus Recruitment Platform to attend recruitment events, offer internships or post vacancies. [WEB www.erasmusrecruitmentdays.nl]

JANUARY
I WILL GET IN THE RING
Submit your idea before 15 January for the I WILL Award. There’s a prize of €15,000 of funding to put an ambitious plan into action. Finalists will pitch their world-class plan showing willpower, ambition and a desire to be active for change on 3 March. [WEB www.rsm.nl/iwillaward]

SPRING
CAREER BOOSTS
Do you have Dutch colleagues interesting in boosting their management careers? Information evenings and open days for RSM’s Dutch-taught Parttime Master Bedrijfskunde in the spring are Saturday 2 April and 21 May 10:00 – 14:00; monthly information evenings are on weeknights. [WEB www.rsm.nl/parttime-bedrijfskunde]

12 MARCH
MBA OPEN DAY
Is anyone in your network thinking about doing an MBA? Or come and share your story with prospective students on RSM’s Open Day on Saturday 12 March. We’ll present MBA programmes to suit all kinds of ambitions, a sample masterclass, an information session about the RSM experience, and an MBA alumni panel. [WEB www.rsm.nl/mbaopenday]

MARCH
CUSTOMS AND SUPPLY CHAIN COMPLIANCE KNOWLEDGE
Improving co-operation in international trade is the aim of the new nine-day Diploma Programme in Customs and Supply Chain Compliance covering trade compliance, EU customs law, auditing, IT, logistics and supply chain. Expected start is March 2016. [WEB www.rsm.nl/cscc]

FEBRUARY
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
Explore collective opportunity, the role of education, career path choices, and ongoing adjustments to corporate and social environmental issues in gender-balanced leadership. The event on campus includes Prof. Dianne Bevelander’s inaugural address and the launch of the Erasmus Centre for Women in Organisations. [WEB www.rsm.nl/ecwo]
Save the date for the next Erasmus Energy Forum – and expect a new and more dynamic format. Business Day is Wednesday 18 May at the World Trade Center, Rotterdam.

Science Day is Thursday 19 May on RSM’s Woudestein campus. The focus of the event is yet to be confirmed.

WEB www.rsm.nl/energyforum

Inspiration for Entrepreneurs

Ambitious entrepreneurs can work with like-minded people every first Tuesday of the month at Day@the-Campus at Erasmus Centre for Entrepreneurship on the 11th floor of the Rotterdam Science Tower. Or try monthly networking drinks every third Friday of the month. Limited capacity, but a fabulous view of Rotterdam!

WEB www.ece.nl/programme

New Ways to Recruit Talent

RSM Job Board continues to improve its services. Companies can search through student CVs from early 2016 and post vacancies. Companies can already use the Job Board to offer internships and find candidates.

WEB jobboard.rsm.nl or EMAIL careerservices@rsm.nl
At any stage of your career, RSM Executive Education can help you understand and master the business challenges you face. Our open programmes provide you with fresh insights and knowledge that can immediately be put into practice. We invite you to take a look at the programmes we offer in the first half of 2016. RSM and Erasmus University alumni are offered a 10 per cent discount.

**JANUARY**
- 20 Jan
  General Counsel Executive Programme
  www.rsm.nl/gcep
- 21 Jan
  Essentials of Coaching
  www.rsm.nl/eoc
- 25 Jan
  Finance for Senior Managers
  www.rsm.nl/fsm

**FEBRUARY**
- 10 Feb
  Project Management in Practice
  www.rsm.nl/pm
- 15 Feb
  The Power of Presence
  www.rsm.nl/pp
- 16 Feb
  Effective Negotiating Skills
  www.rsm.nl/ns
- 25 Feb
  The Power of Storytelling
  www.rsm.nl/ps

**MARCH**
- 03 Mar
  New Business Development
  www.rsm.nl/nbd
- 09 Mar
  Make Strategy Work
  www.rsm.nl/msw
- 14 Mar
  Sales Leadership Diploma Programme
  www.rsm.nl/sl
- 14 Mar
  Diploma Programme in Business Management and Leadership
  www.rsm.nl/bml
- 17 Mar
  Finance for Non-Financial Managers
  www.rsm.nl/fnf
- 17 Mar
  Women in Leadership
  www.rsm.nl/wl
- 22 Mar
  The Strategy Consultants’ Approach to Problem Solving
  www.rsm.nl/sca
- 23 Mar
  Essentials of Business Valuation
  www.rsm.nl/ebv
- 04 Apr
  Business Model Innovation
  www.rsm.nl/bmi
- 12 Apr
  Communication with Power and Impact
  www.rsm.nl/cfw
- 14 Apr
  Business Valuation
  www.rsm.nl/bv
- 18 Apr
  Strategic Account Management
  www.rsm.nl/sam
- 19 Apr
  Advanced Management and Leadership Programme
  www.rsm.nl/amlp

**APRIL**
- 11 May
  Corporate Venturing
  www.rsm.nl/cv
- 25 May
  Project Management in Practice
  www.rsm.nl/pm
- 26 May
  Essentials of Coaching
  www.rsm.nl/eoc
- 31 May
  The Power of Presence
  www.rsm.nl/pp

**MAY**
- 06 Jun
  Diploma Programme in Business Management & Leadership
  www.rsm.nl/bml
- 07 Jun
  Effective Negotiating Skills
  www.rsm.nl/ns
- 15 Jun
  Essentials of Marketing
  www.rsm.nl/em
- 16 Jun
  Negotiating for Women: the Key to Career Success
  www.rsm.nl/nfw

Detailed descriptions of the programmes can be found at www.rsm.nl/open
Please note dates can be subject to change.
Why is this idea picking up speed now? We’d like to think that alumni are more aware of the increasing value of the RSM network, of the benefits of philanthropic acts, and it has never been easier to keep in touch.

Donors tell us they were motivated by the major influence of RSM in their lives – because of the education they received, the lifelong friends they established, or because of the study experience. They want to provide similar opportunities for future students. We see this as a self-perpetuating effect. Helping disadvantaged students to come to RSM creates a more diverse classroom; students have a great experience at RSM and want the same for others, and so the cycle begins again.

Future RSM students can look forward to:

- two American study exchange scholarships of €1,500 for ‘very driven and innovative students’, given every year since 2010.
- a new EUR bachelor scholarship of €3,000 per year for a student from China, offered by RSM IBA and ESE alumni.
- an MBA scholarship planned by the MBA1999 class; they want to raise €30,000 annually by their 20th anniversary in 2019.
- an IBA-alumni backed scholarship for ‘an IBA student with entrepreneurial spirit’ before the end of 2015; it’s currently being finalised.
- a scholarship that came a step closer to fulfilment at our recent alumni reunion day.

It’s still early days for us. We’re still putting in place the structures that will let you give back in the way you want to, and we hope to consolidate a new combined fund for more impact as well as create an overview of scholarships and waivers. At the moment, donations are allocated to future students, but fine-tuning our plans means we can earmark other projects such as developing services or activities, research projects and campus facilities.

If you have an idea or questions about giving back, please contact Nicole Eshuis, Project Manager Fundraising  EMAIL rsmfund@rsm.nl

To talk about mentorship, internships or vacancies, please contact the Alumni Relations Office  EMAIL alumni@rsm.nl
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