MULTI/Media

The many sides of MULTI.engineering

December 2021 / Anniversary issue 25 years of MULTI.engineering

- Building & Infrastructure: Building 182 'Schools of Tomorrow'
- Maritime & Offshore: Sailing towards autonomy in the near future?
- Industry: Continued growth in automotive

MULTI.engineering Group

400.000

ENGINEERING HOURS
100.000 in our design and engineering offices
300.000 through Project sourcing

250

EXPERTS
70 at our design and engineering offices
180 through Project sourcing

3

BUSINESS UNITS
Industry, Building & Infrastructure,
Maritime & Offshore

25

SERVICE TEAM STAFF

6

DESIGN & ENGINEERING OFFICES
Temse, Vlissingen, Zwijndrecht (NL)
Komarno, Ghent, Delft

3

COUNTRIES
the Netherlands, Belgium, Slovakia

7

OFFICES
Temse, Vlissingen, Breda,
Zwijndrecht (NL), Komarno, Ghent, Delft

Connecting the dots

"Believing that the dots will connect down the road will give you the confidence to follow your heart, even when it leads you off the well-worn path, and that will make all the difference."

- STEVE JOBS, 2005

BY WOUTER VAN GOEYE (r), **MANAGING DIRECTOR BUILDING & INFRASTRUCTURE / INDUSTRY & NIKO FIERENS** (l), **MANAGING DIRECTOR MARITIME & OFFSHORE**

"MULTI.engineering wants to be a catalyst for change in the future. Together with you."

Looking back on 25 years of MULTI.engineering, we immediately think of a speech by Steve Jobs in which he explains how the combination of certain coincidences and conscious choices determined the path of his life and career.

WHAT EVENTS HAVE DETERMINED OUR PATH AND HOW CAN WE CONNECT THESE DOTS?

A first important event was the simultaneous bankruptcy of numerous Belgian shipyards in 1995. For Etienne Van Goeye, this marked the third bankruptcy in his career. He then made a bold choice: "Let's do it ourselves!". Entrepreneurship at its best.

It takes guts and an enormous drive. But, above all, in that very moment he followed his heart. As a 20-year old student, Wouter watched this with great interest. His path for the future was set.

The past 25 years have been full of pivotal moments. For example: our first e-mail address, first website, 9/11, the rise of job platforms, evolutions in calculation and drawing tools, the banking crisis, changes in legislation, new start-ups and takeovers, strategic choices, and of course ... the COVID-19 pandemic.

Each of these events has determined our direction. It's no different for Niko. Somewhere along the way, in 2013, he came across a unique business opportunity in the sector that had stolen his heart. With this, his future path took a turn as well.

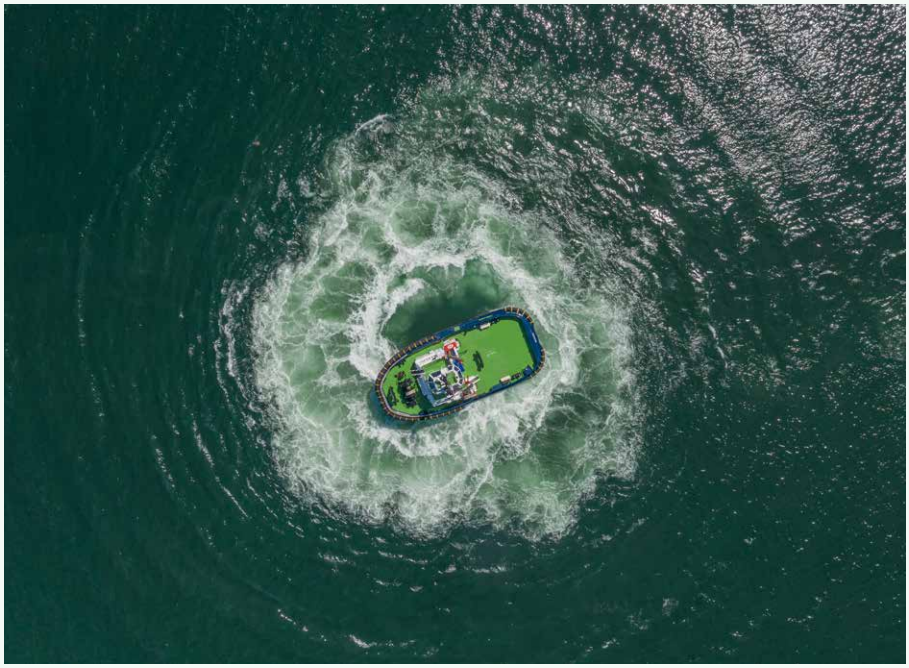
WOUTER: "For me personally, one of the most important moments was at the beginning of 2010, a year after the banking crisis. We had just moved into our new office in Temse. A lot of customers were struggling, many of our first employees had retired and I just didn't feel 'it' in our Service Team. Just at that time, I had received an old management book: 'From Good to Great'. It describes the common characteristics of companies that have surpassed their competitors. One of them being 'First the people, then the strategy'. Make sure you have the right people in your vehicle and then decide where you want to go. That same year, we made a re-start with an almost entirely new team. Together we laid the foundations for many great years to come. Today I feel the same way as I did 11 years ago. At MULTI.engineering today, we have a team of people who want to think along, who are committed, who want to be enterprising and who go all out. And that is an environment in which I have felt at home for over 25 years."

NIKO: "What challenges lie ahead of us? Which dots will we connect in the future? Without a doubt, our climate is a major challenge for the coming decades. Our children, our customers and we ourselves are losing sleep over it. The past climate summit made clear once again that we all urgently need to step up and, especially, that we will not succeed on our own. We must work together. From the very beginning, we've intuitively taken full responsibility as a company to care of our employees and society. We want to be a catalyst for change in the future. We consider it our mission. Together with you."


MULTI


MULTI/MEDIA


2013
MULTI



Colophon

MULTI/Media is the magazine of MULTI.engineering group. **Editorial team** Bianca Derweduwen, Sabine Baecke, Wouter Van Goeye, Niko Fierens, Lola Fierens
Final editing: karakters.be **Design and lay-out**: karakters.be **Photography**: Bas Bogaerts and our clients
On the cover: Niko Fierens, Wouter Van Goeye en Nicolas Van Goeye.
We welcome your feedback, comments or suggestions! bianca.derweduwen@multi.engineering
Subscription Subscribe at www.multi.engineering

Inspiring workplaces

"Our office in the historic center of Delft is located close to the beating heart of the Dutch offshore industry and the technical research and training institutions. That gives us inspiration and input to pioneer in innovations that our world needs tomorrow."

– JEROEN LUSTHOF, MANAGING DIRECTOR MARIDEA, DELFT

"At our office in Zwijndrecht you really sit among engineers and that ensures a good connection with the industry. Seeing a client's yard from the window gives you the feeling that you are really part of the entire process."

– DENNIS BOURQUIN, FINANCIAL MANAGER, ZWIJNDRECHT (NL)

"Our office on the quays of the port of Vlissingen provides the perfect environment for gaining knowledge and becoming an experienced shipbuilding engineer."

– JOHAN CIJSOUW, LEAD ENGINEER AND SHAREHOLDER, VLISSINGEN

After being forced to work from home for several months, many of our colleagues have come to appreciate their offices even more. Some even get downright lyrical!

THE NETHERLANDS
ZWIJNDRECHT (NL)
BREDA
VLISSINGEN
DELFT

BELGIUM
TEMSE
GHENT

"Our offices in Komárno (Slovakia), where traditional maritime design and the challenges of the future are combined in a professional approach. Where the impossible becomes possible."

– ROBERT BOTH, OFFICE MANAGER AND SHAREHOLDER, KOMÁRNO

SLOVAKIA
KOMARNO

Engineers with a passion for people, for over 25 years

The mood during our interview with the three frontmen of MULTI.engineering - Nicolas and Wouter Goeye, and Niko Fierens - is enthusiastic, albeit larded with a healthy dose of realism. Since its inception, MULTI.engineering, and society, has seen tremendous change. During this interview, we look back at the past 25 years, in addition to looking ahead at the solutions that MULTI.engineering is deploying as part of its effort to meet future challenges.

CONGRATULATIONS ON THIS SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY! 25 YEARS OF MULTI.ENGINEERING. SO HOW DOES IT FEEL?

WOUTER: Good! A lot has happened in those years. It felt quite challenging at times. We can be proud of what we have achieved since then. A team of 250 experts, 7 branch offices, a Service Team with a workforce of 25 employees and more than 100 clients. An occasion we intend to celebrate in style with our colleagues!

NICOLAS: In recent years, many of our competitors have been absorbed by large consultancies. MULTI.engineering continues to be an independent family business.

NIKO: With remarkably loyal clients! Which isn't usual in our industry.

HOW HAS MULTI.ENGINEERING BEEN ABLE TO MAINTAIN ITS POSITION AS A 'SMALL' PLAYER IN AN INDUSTRY THAT IS GEARED TOWARDS ECONOMIES OF SCALE?

NICOLAS: MULTI.engineering has its own unique company culture. Besides the technical aspect of our job, we also value the human aspect. Building long-term relationships, both with our employees and our customers.

NIKO: Obviously, we too have felt the impact of globalisation. Fewer ships are being built in our region. Competition literally knows no bounds nowadays. Although prices are lower on average on the other side of the world, our clients still prefer to work with us on engineering projects that are more intricate. Language and culture still play an important part in this.

WOUTER: Our workforce has also become more international. More diverse. And we have succeeded in tailoring our services to our customers' needs. We are extremely flexible, offering a higher level of service.

CAN YOU COMPARE MULTI. ENGINEERING TODAY WITH THE COMPANY THAT YOU FOUNDED IN 1996?

WOUTER: We have undergone substantial change in the past 25 years. Five years ago, we had very different ideas about a positioning with three clearly-defined business units. We now know from experience that each business unit needs to stress its own unique strengths to target specific markets. Obviously, society has also changed a lot in the meantime. The internet, digitalisation, sustainability, diversity, etc.

NIKO: We have noticed this increased attention to sustainability in many of our projects. From the conversion of ships into more climate-friendly vessels to machines to build offshore wind farms. We are constantly learning, and making adjustments as a result.

INCLUDING IN THE GROUP'S STRUCTURE, WHICH RECENTLY WENT THROUGH AN OVERHAUL?

NICOLAS: MULTI.engineering has posted constant growth. On the occasion of our 20th anniversary, we made a strategic plan that was entirely based on synergies. We expected our customers' revenue to increase, combined with a decrease in internal costs due to the introduction of corporate roles at group level. These expectations were not met. And the group's quality and speed deteriorated. We soon realised that we had made a mistake, eliminating the corporate roles and turning our business units back into autonomous units that are able to respond much faster.

NIKO: The group structure got in the way of entrepreneurship while also diluting the sense of ownership. We have now brought these two aspects back to the fore.

WOUTER: It's beautiful to stay slim. Our approach is much more qualitative

Wouter Van Goeye (46)

MANAGING DIRECTOR

BUILDING & INFRASTRUCTURE / INDUSTRY

Wouter joined MULTI.engineering at the very start. Initially on a work placement, from 1996 to 1998. After graduating as a commercial engineer, he held various positions in different departments, such as finance, payroll, as an account manager Maritime & Offshore etc. In 2006, Wouter was appointed Managing Director of MULTI.engineering.

From 2016 till 2019, Wouter served as the Director of the Shared Service Center. Two years ago, he became responsible for the Industry and Building & Infrastructure business units. The workforce of these units has since evolved from 35 employees to a team of more than 100 experts.

Nicolas Van Goeye (43)

MANAGING DIRECTOR MULTI.ENGINEERING GROUP

After graduating in 2002, Nicolas was outsourced to an architectural firm by MULTI.engineering, where he gained experience as a contractor and project developer. In the meantime, he also took courses in maritime technology. In 2006, Nicolas joined the company full-time as a project leader four our engineering office. When the company relocated to Temse in 2009, Nicolas was appointed CEO. From 2022, Nicolas will delegate operational tasks to his colleagues Niko and Wouter to focus instead on his role as coach and sounding board. He will remain chairman of the Board of Directors.

Niko Fierens (49)

MANAGING DIRECTOR / MARITIME & OFFSHORE

Niko trained as a naval architect, starting his career at MULTI.engineering as... a client! In 2004, he was working in the technical department of a shipping company. Prior to this, Niko was employed as a surveyor and as researcher at the university. In 2011, Niko obtained an MBA, graduating with a thesis on training programmes to help young professionals develop soft skills.

In 2013, he made the switch to MULTI.engineering, using his expertise to manage and further develop the Maritime & Offshore business unit.

"As a smaller organisation our approach is much more qualitative."

– WOUTER VAN GOEYE

"Expertise continues to be the way forward! Soft skills are what sets us apart."

– NICOLAS VAN GOEYE

"People must enjoy working with or for us."

– NIKO FIERENS

as a result. Our organisation had become too slow and cumbersome. The increased independence facilitates the execution of projects. We have now picked up the pace again. Industry and Building & Infrastructure have seen an increase in business for 2 years now. This is our best year since 2015.

AND YOUR EMPLOYEE AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION REFLECTS THIS?

WOUTER: An NPS score of 62, this is one of the best scores worldwide.

NICOLAS: This satisfaction is also due in part to the fact that we are a niche player with a clear idea of what we do or don't do. Crucially, our service team staff must understand what our clients want. Because we have so much more to offer than expertise and capacity.

NIKO: We are not afraid to admit our mistakes either and we always devise a tailor-made solution. We are prepared to engage in extensive dialogue.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FOR MULTI. ENGINEERING AT THE MOMENT?

NICOLAS: While industry and construction are picking up pace again, we have had to review several projects due to the price increases of raw materials. This generates quite a bit of tension in the market.

WOUTER: In industry, someone always stands to benefit from these price increases. We prefer to go with the economic flow. Despite the price hikes, private investors continue to invest. Our goal is to increase the added value on their investment.

NIKO: Within Maritime & Offshore, the investment momentum is clearly much slower. Clients are taking longer and longer when it comes to making decisions and have become more cautious. Efficiency and risk management have become even more important in project execution. And that is exactly what we excel at.

HOW HAS MULTI.ENGINEERING MANAGED TO MAINTAIN ITS POLE POSITION?

NICOLAS: Because of our company history, we often tend strive to exceed specifications when it comes to design. We ensure that our designs work efficiently and also think about operational reliability, maintenance, ease of use etc. And becoming smarter in the process, along with our customers.

NIKO: Co-makership is embedded in our DNA. We don't believe in a top-down relationship with our clients, as product leaders. Instead we prefer an intimate collaboration that places the emphasis on mutual improvement.

WOUTER: We also develop a comprehensive, personalised training plan for each of our employees. The technical aspect continues to be a focal point, however. Besides soft skills, we need to ensure that our people have the technical ability required in addition to being able to offer them a technical challenge.

NICOLAS: Expertise continues to be the way forward! Soft skills are what set us apart.

NIKO: Within Maritime & Offshore, we are increasingly focusing on innovation projects, even if we don't have a client yet. We always develop these innovations in collaboration with other partners. Universities, as well as other engineering consultancies, shipping companies, suppliers, shipyards etc. You have to be able to acknowledge that others are smarter than you. That is how you develop stronger innovation. We are not a forerunner. We prefer to think of ourselves as initiators and motivators.

NICOLAS: We prefer to focus on the collective interest, rather than our self-interest. Our engineers have to be able to flex their technical skills but also be given the opportunity to put their heart and soul into their job. I'm curious to see how this will have changed in 5 to 10 years.

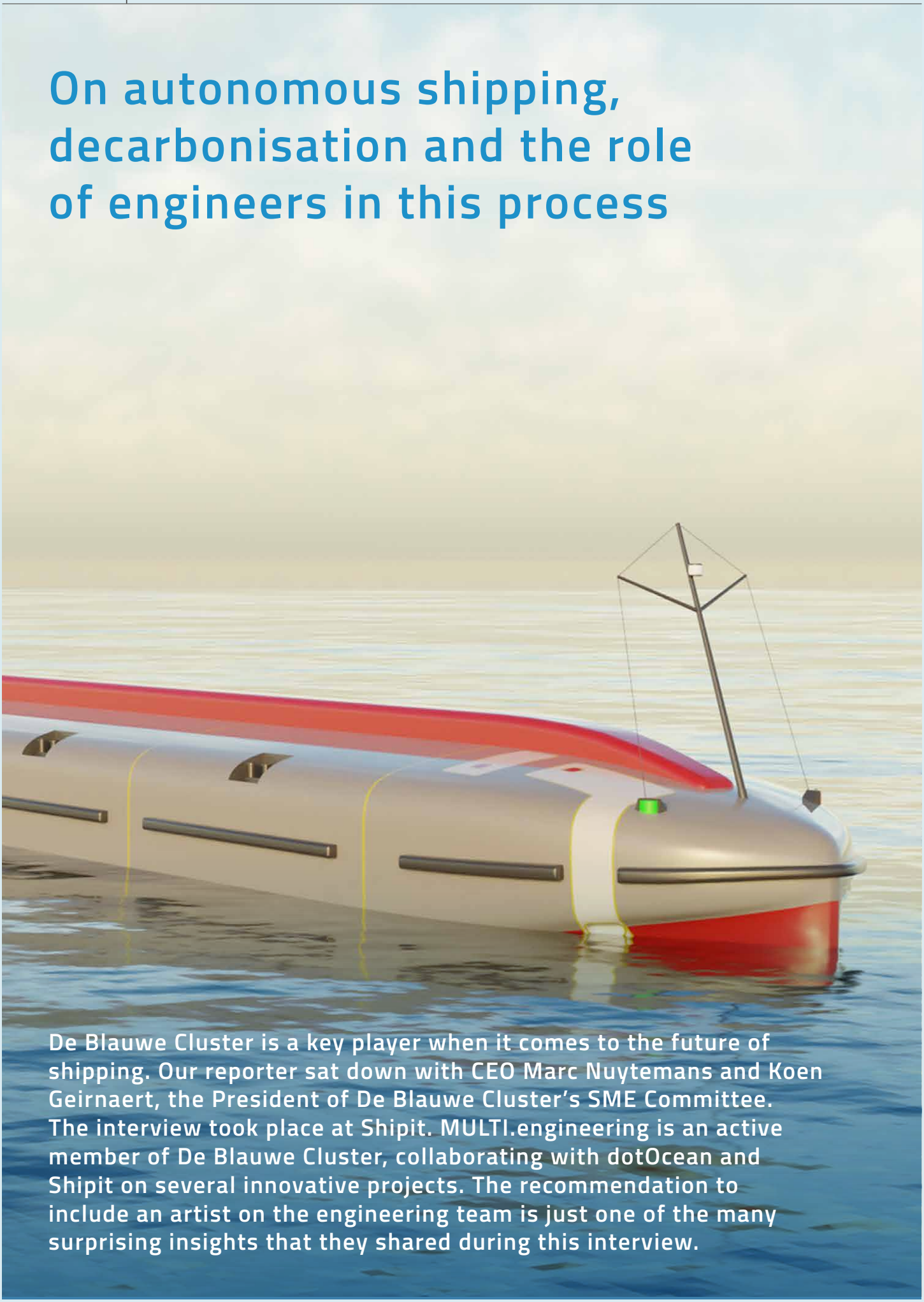
IN A DREAM SCENARIO, WHAT WOULD MULTI.ENGINEERING LOOK LIKE IN 10 YEARS FROM NOW?

NICOLAS: It would be great if, in 10 years' time, we have found a way to ensure the job satisfaction of our employees, both at a technical and human level. We strive for happy employees, happy customers and happy shareholders in a participative model. We are prepared to take steps to achieve this.

NIKO: It would be great if clients, employees and partners all would firmly state that it is great to work with or for MULTI. engineering.

WOUTER: Our priority is always to guarantee job security, to recruit more young people and to continue to offer them a technical job that is exciting. Working at —and with — MULTI.engineering should be a bit like eating in a Michelin-starred restaurant: while you may not remember everything you've eaten, you'll never forget the service and the wow factor!

On autonomous shipping, decarbonisation and the role of engineers in this process



De Blauwe Cluster is a key player when it comes to the future of shipping. Our reporter sat down with CEO Marc Nuytemans and Koen Geirnaert, the President of De Blauwe Cluster's SME Committee. The interview took place at Shipit. MULTI.engineering is an active member of De Blauwe Cluster, collaborating with dotOcean and Shipit on several innovative projects. The recommendation to include an artist on the engineering team is just one of the many surprising insights that they shared during this interview.

WHAT IS SHIPPING?

MARC NUYTEMANS: That's a really good question! Most people associate shipping with the shipment of goods. But we equate shipping with 'maritime transport'. 85% of world trade is done by ship.

"Smart shipping is about increasing efficiency and safety with less costs."

WHAT CHALLENGES DOES SHIPPING FACE TODAY?

MARC: Decarbonisation and automation are hot topics in shipping. And they also happen to be closely interlinked. For too long, shipping has been hiding behind the smokescreen of being the most environmentally-friendly mode of transport, based on the large volumes shipped per vessel and per mile travelled. Fortunately this is set to change, partly under the impetus of Europe's **Green Deal**. There already is considerable support in shipping for sustainability but the competition is fierce in our industry, with everyone working hard to save costs. So when you raise the issue of sustainability in the context of autonomous shipping, people are quick to respond that this is just another trick to do away with crews. But in reality, autonomous shipping increases safety by eliminating repetitive tasks.

KOEN GEIRNAERTS: For me automation or smart shipping is all about increasing efficiency, cutting costs and increasing safety. Along with clean shipping, these are the crucial themes that will define the future of our industry.

ANY IDEA WHICH TYPE OF ENERGY CARRIER WILL BE USED AS PART OF DECARBONISATION?

KOEN: I don't think that there is one simple, easy answer to this. Fuel cannot be separated from the entire supply chain and energy is not an end in itself. You need to take the entire logistical process into account. How can you optimise this based on the availability of possible energy sources?

MARC: The supply chain is an all-determining factor for the fuel of the future. The current uncertainty

Marc Nuytemans (l) has a long and rich past in the shipping industry. He was a captain in the merchant navy and held several executive positions at the Royal Belgian Shipowners Association and Exmar. He was appointed CEO of De Blauwe Cluster in 2020.

DE BLAUWE CLUSTER is a partnership for the development of economic activities in the North Sea. Its members include more than 150 companies and knowledge institutions.

SHIPIT is a team of experts in multimodal transport.

DOTOCEAN is a Belgian pioneer in autonomous shipping technology.

Koen Geirnaert (r) is a civil engineer who founded dotOcean with two of his colleagues. He serves as the company's CEO and is also the President of De Blauwe Cluster's SME Committee.

about this is a major issue for the shipping industry. In the past, ship owners all faced the same problem: everyone was in the same boat, whether fuel cost USD 1,200 per tonne or USD 250. These days, however, if you buy or have a ship built, you know this vessel will last for 20 years at least. Which means that the choice of fuel or energy carrier determines your profit and loss for the next two decades. You pay three times the price of your vessel in fuel during its lifetime.

HOW IS SMART SHIPPING LINKED TO THIS?

KOEN: How shipping will be decarbonised depends on the availability and distribution of new, more sustainable energy carriers. This complex logistics chain can only be organised in an economical and efficient manner if all the sub-processes are automated, including the actual operation of the vessels. With automation you can optimise the entire chain, by deploying technology and systems unconditionally, regardless of human limitations or time constraints. This adds another time dimension to the chain. That is where the added value lies. Moreover, an autonomous system does not work stand-alone, but is part of a data community such as, for example, the just-in-time processes in which a trigger is created when a container has to move from A to B. Essentially you need to subdivide your entire transport process into automatable packages. Automation is part of a much broader context. The entire logistics chain needs to be automated.

CAN YOU GIVE EXAMPLES OF AUTOMATION?

KOEN: The logistics chain is a very long process. dotOcean focuses on end-to-end automation, albeit on very small sites, for a contractor, for a dock in the port. We have noticed that you only achieve real efficiency gains with automation if you tackle every part of the process. The Marine Litter Hunter's partnership with DEME is a good example of this. A self-propelled unmanned barge (small flat vessel) sails between two docking stations, removing floating waste from the Scheldt. The device is triggered by a piece of waste that floats along. And we supply an autonomous end-to-end solution.

MARC: *The Amazons and Alibabas* of this world are currently investing the most in this. Did you know that cars were considered a blessing for the environment in the olden days? Bear in mind that city streets used to be populated with hundreds of thousands of horses every day. In the summertime, they would reek to high heaven. Which explains why they first loved cars so much when they were launched. And now we have low emission zones... This example shows that you really need a longer-term perspective. Self-driving cars are no different in this respect. It's not just

about the technology for driving autonomously. If you were to fit all cars with a connected unmanned operating system tomorrow, the roads would be a lot safer, and congestion would be significantly reduced. But the technology developed must be part of a much larger concept.

SO WHEN DO YOU THINK THE FIRST AUTONOMOUS SHIPS WILL APPEAR ON OUR OCEANS?

MARC: This will largely depend on the applicable regulations (and we all know that legislation is always running behind) and on widespread public support. The general consensus is still that anything not controlled by human hands poses a threat.

It is likely that it will be introduced more quickly in inland shipping—probably within the next ten years—because that is a much more controlled environment. I think it will be another 30 years at least for maritime shipping. The obstacles are public support and legislation, not the technology.

SO WHAT SHOULD AN ENGINEERING CONSULTANCY FOCUS ON IN THE CONTEXT OF THESE TWO THEMES?

MARC: People often think that engineering is all about the nuts and bolts of machinery, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Engineering solutions means having engineers intervene in processes.

KOEN: You start from your clients situation. A client has lots of questions about the various trends and ideas that are currently doing the rounds: ammonia, hydrogen, methanol, LNG, batteries, fuel cells, wind, fuel additives, etc.

At some point, someone may say: "I have a brilliant idea". But you will still need someone to execute it. If you're looking for the interface between knowledge and execution, it has to be in engineering, right? Since the supply chain is so important, you need people who understand this supply chain from A to Z.

MARC: A good working knowledge of shipping and navigation continues to be important. You need someone with enough knowledge about what navigation is, to be able to build an algorithm to do that. Otherwise you'll end up having someone trying to steer a ship with a 16-metre draft through a sandbar with a water depth of 4 metres.

THAT'S RIGHT. THAT'S WHY MULTI.ENGINEERING HIRES ENGINEERS, AS WELL AS PEOPLE WITH AN OPERATIONAL BACKGROUND.

KOEN: Further to that, I think you also need to have genuine technological expertise. Logistics involve large amounts of data. If you want to automate something, you need to base your decisions on very accurate data. The entire model will fall down like a house of cards if the data are not qualitative and reliable. And your robot will make the wrong decisions. I think you mainly need people who can learn how to deal with large amounts of data.

MARC: What you really need is to include an artist in the reflection process! Take Panamarenko and his flying machines. You need someone who thinks outside of the traditional box. This is something that many conceptual artists do. They develop ideas in very different ways. If you're looking at developing breakthrough innovations, you need someone like that on board. Someone with a different perspective on things.

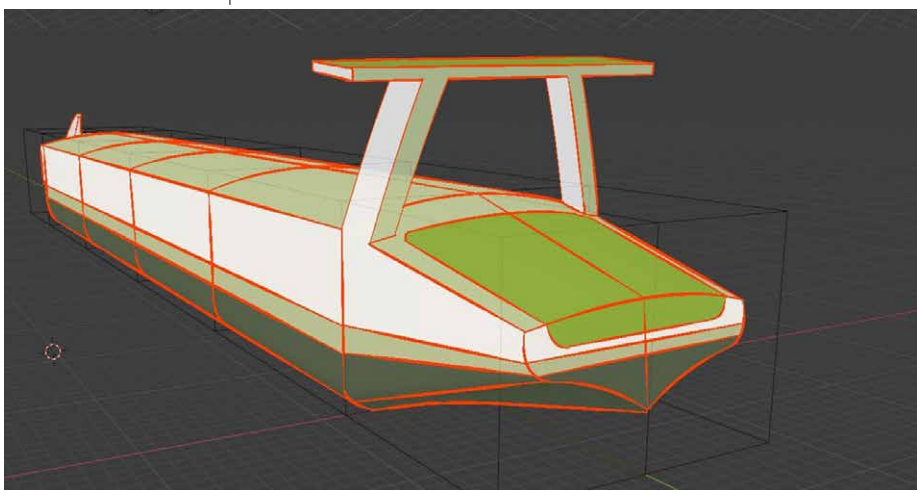
DO YOU ALSO NEED TO CHANGE HOW YOU COLLABORATE? HOW YOU OPERATE AS A COMPANY?

KOEN: Knowledge and complexity are increasing exponentially. This trend is apparent on so many levels that none of the individual players, even though they are major players, have a good working knowledge of the subdisciplines. This knowledge explosion forces companies to partner. You can no longer go it alone. Collaboration through innovation is therefore a necessity.

DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF SHIPPING AS ROSY?

MARC: Absolutely! **I fundamentally believe that the future of humankind is in and at sea.** We need to create social support for this. We need to make sure that people understand that and explain that this change is not necessarily a threat for them. **Ultimately, we all depend on the seas and waterways for our energy supply, for food, for.... We depend on that 80% of planet Earth, which should have really been called 'water'.**

MULTI.engineering investigates which restrictions can be set aside to develop the ship of the future. The complete logistics chain and modularity of all (technical) systems on board are the main drivers for the design.



www.blauwecluster.be

www.shipit.be

www.dotocean.eu

CNHI and MULTI. engineering: growing together in automotive

One colleague who has learned a lot about agricultural vehicles in recent years is Anne-Céline Mainil, Account Manager Industry. She sat down with Wouter Van Goeye, the Director of our Industry and Building & Infrastructure business units, to discuss their collaboration with Case New Holland Industrial (CNHI).

The assembly of agricultural vehicles still requires a lot of manual work. We optimize efficiency, speed and ergonomics.

In October 2020, MULTI.engineering worked for Case New Holland (CNHI) for the first time. CNHI was particularly interested in MULTI.engineering because of our experience in Automotive.

CNHI produces all kinds of tractors. The company's Antwerp-based subsidiary, for which MULTI.engineering works, produces the drive lines or transmissions for these tractors. A drive line is the gearbox of a tractor. This is quite complicated as a tractor has 26 gears.

Automotive experience

"CNHI was looking for a project manager with experience in the Automotive industry", Wouter recalls. "Bert Vermeulen, who has been working at MULTI. engineering for almost 10 years, was the perfect expert for this brief, given his previous projects at Volvo Cars in Ghent."

Currently four MULTI.engineering experts work for CNHI. MULTI.engineering and CNHI both have a Single Point of Contact (SPOC). This means that Account Manager Anne-Celine works closely with CNHI's Launch Manager, Rudi Geuten. He confirms that the collaboration is going very smoothly. "MULTI.engineering manages to quickly understand what we want and correctly define what we need. In addition, MULTI.engineering guarantees a good follow-up of its experts, both in terms of the project's progress and their job satisfaction, and in terms of safety."

MULTI.engineering is currently optimising the assembly line and workstations in preparation for new product launches. So what does this mean? Anne-Celine: "In the past year there were three new launches, and each required an adjustment of the assembly line because new options are added to the drivelines. Project ADV48, for example, relates to a new model with several variants that is being launched on the Case New Holland assembly line. These new drivetrains feature several new options that were developed in Italy and are produced on the production line in Antwerp. Our team of project experts has ensured that the necessary preparations were made for this launch and that they were implemented as smoothly as possible."

WOUTER: "Building this new type of driveline on the assembly line has proven quite challenging. First the experts examine how this process can work successfully on the line and secondly, they look at how all the pieces that are needed for this driveline fit on the assembly line. They then check which tooling is needed to mount these pieces on the driveline."

MULTI.engineering's brief also includes improving ergonomics for workers, which is very important. The optimisation of these assembly lines is geared towards improving efficiency, speed and ergonomics. This requires a lot of manual work, compared with car manufacturing for example. This must be done in the most optimal conditions.

A growth market: tractors used outside of agriculture

The market for agricultural vehicles is growing very quickly because these vehicles are no longer exclusively used in agriculture. The building and infrastructure sectors are increasingly using them too. A tractor is extremely useful for pulling heavy loads over unstable ground. If you drive past the Oosterweel construction site in Antwerp, you will also regularly spot tractors there.

Rudi aptly summarises the social relevance of CNHI, saying: "If we stop making tractors, people will no longer have food on their plates. Farming equates food. It's that simple." As such, CNHI is also contributing to achieving one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, namely 'Zero Hunger'.

Expertise in automotive

The growing demand at CNHI means the company is an ideal customer for MULTI.engineering. They have seen a huge increase in their number of projects and we can assist them with that.

Moreover, this also enables us to grow our knowledge and customer portfolio in the automotive industry. Which in turn is very interesting for both our customers and our experts.

Thanks to our knowledge and experience, we were able to assist CNHI with the structuring and phasing of its launch projects. This will only improve, with all subsequent launch projects.

CNHI's management is very progressive and thinks there is plenty of potential for optimisation. It's fair to say that we will be taking our collaboration to the next level in the foreseeable future.

A lot can change in 25 years, especially in engineering. Dirk was one of the first employees at MULTI.engineering and will be retiring next year. Mats joined our company three years ago. Despite the difference in seniority, junior and senior see eye to eye.

Mats Weemaes (24)

Project Leader/work planner
BUSINESS UNIT
Industry
PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT
ArcelorMittal Ghent

Dirk Deyaert (59)

Project Manager/lead engineer
BUSINESS UNIT
Maritime & Offshore
PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT
DEO Temse

Life was better in the old days?

I don't think so. The old technology was more of a tool. These days, we use computers for almost everything. In my job everything depends on technology.
I use software for the technical preparation of construction sites, to draw up a planning schedule for different teams, and to request cleaning services and repossessions.

I would argue that we did things differently in the old days. Nowadays the technology and standards are much better. In the old days, we did our calculations with a calculator and vessel designs were done on tracing paper. I remember having to draw vessel plans 1/1 on the loft floor. We also used to trace the internal construction of vessels on large sheets of plastic film.

What the future holds...

... a refinement of the preparatory process with 3D scans and improved drone technology. I also think measurements and repairs will see an acceleration thanks to digital twin as-built drawings or models.

... a new technological evolution that ensures that managing people and achieving objectives in the short and long term will become even more important.

Digitalisation changes everything

I was trained to work with the latest technology and ICT tools. So in that sense I can't say that I've seen a real digital change.

Smart systems have eliminated many tasks, but digitalisation also paves the way for new opportunities. Embrace the change and you build your own future.

Concept Design Trailing Suction Hopper

For a US client MULTI.engineering has developed the concept design for a new Trailing Suction Hopper Dredger. This ship is the first of its kind in the US market in terms of efficiency and size. Our offices in Temse and Vlissingen have jointly prepared a full concept and tender package ready for submission to shipyards in the US.
We further have assisted the client in defining the complete life cycle cost of various propulsion methods to enable a correct selection of the main machinery.
This design would be the largest trailing suction hopper dredger in the US and compliant with the most strict emission requirements in the world.

www.blauwecluster.be/project/intensse-h2

INTENSSE-H2 – Research & Development

Hydrogen is a very promising energy carrier for the future and an interesting storage solution to deal with energy surpluses from offshore wind installations. To produce this green hydrogen at sea with common technology, the source seawater first needs to be desalinated prior to electrolysis. This makes it a very expensive process requiring a significant footprint on the floating production platform. With this R&D project the feasibility is being investigated of an innovative concept whereas green hydrogen will be produced directly from seawater by combining salt water treatment through forward osmosis and electrolysis in one process.

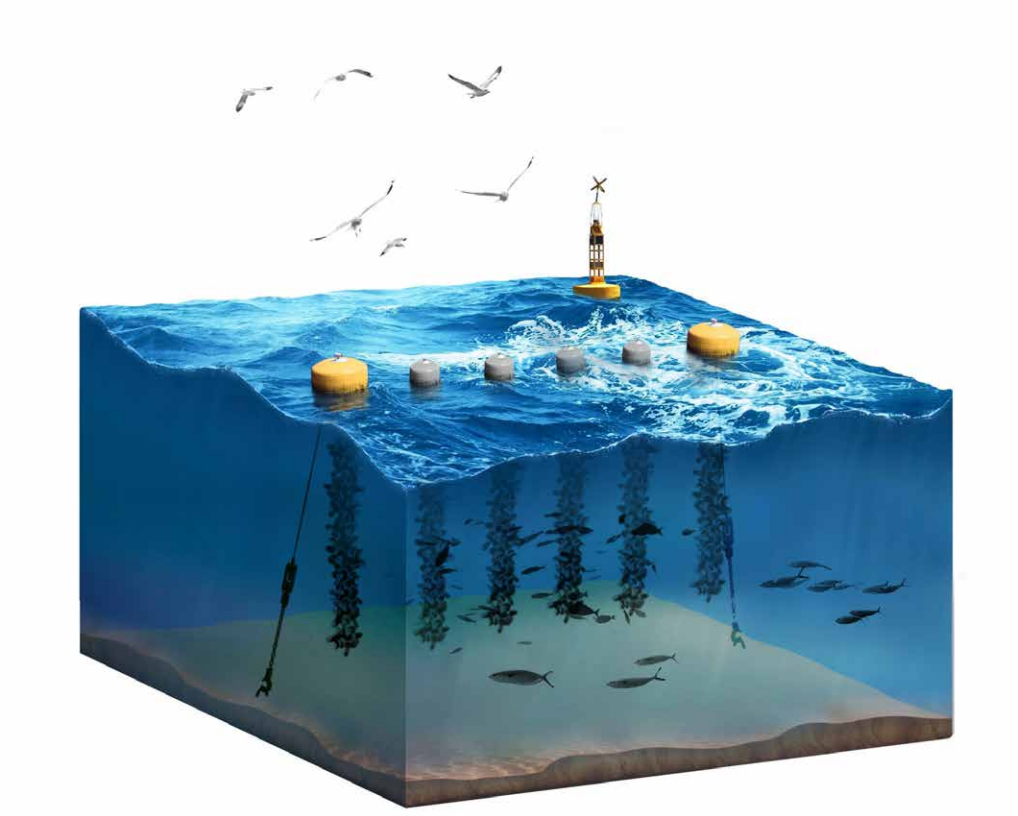
MULTI.engineering together with partners Agfa, Euraqua and Vito will perform this feasibility study for this concept. It's the objective to further evolve to an industrial realisation. This project is funded by VLAIO with support from the Blue Cluster.

Improved connection between the shores

MULTI.engineering Komarno, Vlissingen and Temse joined forces in the design of passenger ships' renewal at Lake Balaton. The main goal is to improve the connection between the two shores as an alternative for car travel. According to the plans, the boats will comply with barrier-free standards, they will be air-conditioned and suitable for bicycle transport.

multi.engineering/maritime-offshore/projects/bahart-catamaran-and-ferry

FLANDERS INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP BLUE CLUSTER
Clusters for Growth



Home-grown mussels

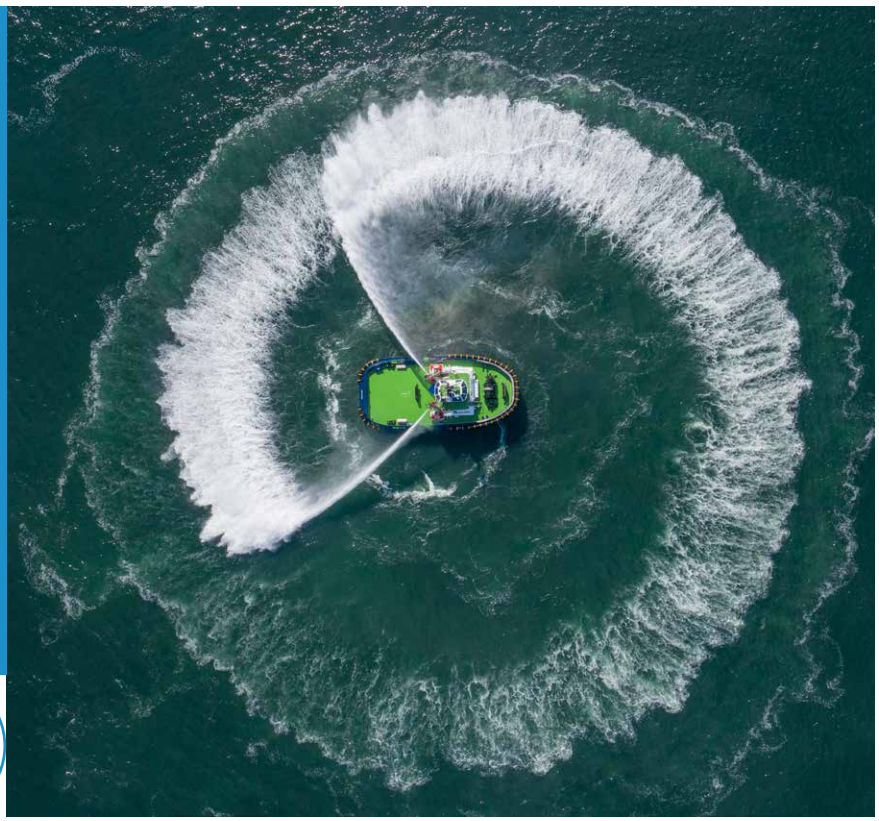
The pilot offshore mussels-farming project at the Belgian Coast, an initiative by Colruyt Group, is scaling up. MULTI. engineering teamed up with sister company Maridea and Ghent University to perform the FEED study for this innovative sea farm project. Soon Belgium's national dish 'Moules Frites' can be prepared with home-grown mussels!

multi.engineering/maritime-offshore/projects/home-grown-mussels

Project delay due to Covid-19 avoided by MULTI.engineering

The commissioning of 2 new built Tugs was scheduled at the beginning of August 2020. This included inclining tests and delivery sea trials. Due to Covid-19 and travel restrictions, Boluda could not get their own supervisor on location. MULTI.engineering was able to provide local support from their worldwide network of Fleet Support professionals.

multi.engineering/maritime-offshore/projects/supervision



Philippe Monserez, Chief Design & Build Officer, AG Real Estate
Programme Director 'Scholen van Morgen'/Schools of Tomorrow

Construction partners for over 20 years

"Among other things, MULTI.engineering offerts training and is attentive for the work/life balance. People are, as much as possible, employed in their own region."

Every company hopes to have customers with whom you can grow and work together successfully for several years, right? In this anniversary issue, we have chosen to highlight our collaboration with Philippe Monserez. It's thanks to him that MULTI.engineering originally entered the construction industry. We first worked with him when he was at Fortis Bank (in 1999). In 2012, he moved to AG Real Estate. These ambitious opportunities even inspired us to create our 'Building & Infrastructure' Business Unit. Since then, we have already completed so many construction projects together that we've lost count!

It all started with bank branches

Initially Philippe Monserez worked as Program Manager Facility Management at Belgian bank ASLK. Following the merger of ASLK and Generale Bank in 1999 and the creation of Fortis Bank, all of the new bank's real estate received an upgrade. In addition to an optimisation, the Belgian branch network needed a uniform look and feel, which is why all the new and existing branches were revamped. The larger administrative buildings, including the Botanique in Brussels and a handful of real estate investment projects, were completely stripped and redesigned. The supervision of all these simultaneous renovations was an enormous undertaking. MULTI.engineering deployed a large team given the scope of this undertaking. "It was our very first construction project and one of the largest we ever took on", Wouter remembers. "At one point, we were able to simultaneously deploy 23 experts: project managers, project leaders, architects, interior designers, draughtsmen etc.

Schools of Tomorrow

One of AG Real Estate's largest projects is Schools of Tomorrow. Philippe Monserez, who was appointed programme director of this ambitious project in 2012, explains: "This is a DBFM project: Design, Build, Finance and Maintain. AG Real Estate is responsible for the management of the programme, which includes offering guidance to the schools during the entire design and building process, and the first 30 years of maintenance. As the delegated construction manager, we also select partners for the design and construction".

And that is where MULTI.engineering enters the picture again. Philippe Monserez remembered that MULTI.engineering did a great job from their previous collaboration. Wouter Van Goeye: "Schools of Tomorrow was our new operational start. At a time when the bank was significantly winding down its investments, 165 projects were started up across Flanders and in Brussels, meaning we had to deploy an entire team in a very short time frame." "Geneviève Vernimmen, the first team member, arrived on 28 November 2011", Philippe Monserez remembers. "Ten years later, we have completed 174 projects, and we are still very happy to be working with MULTI.engineering".

It's like going into battle every day

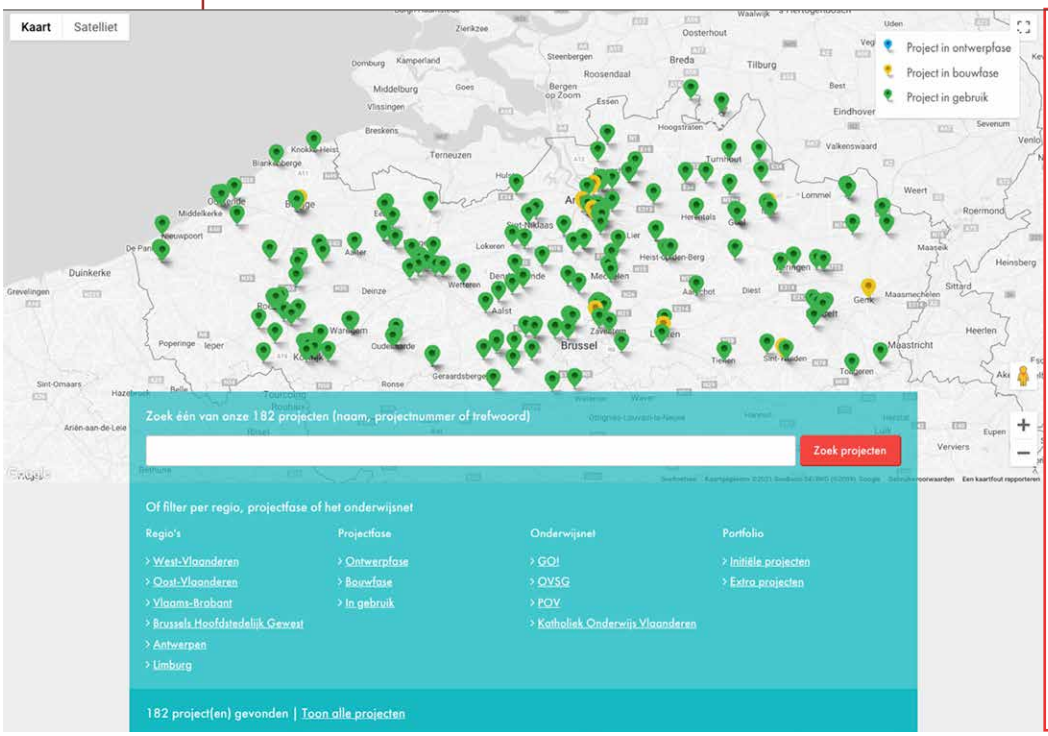
The work for Schools of Tomorrow is very specific. MULTI.engineering supplies project managers for every stage of the process. A lot of work is done simultaneously, involving a large number of different parties and plenty of stakeholder consultation. Once the design has been completed, construction can commence. At this stage, you also need PMs, albeit with a different specialisation.

"We grew from 2 to 35 project managers in no time at all, with each of them overseeing 4 to 5 projects simultaneously. At peak times, the team expanded to 60 and even 70 people. We had to scour the market for qualified employees", Wouter laughs. Or as Philippe Monserez puts it: "The design phase, during which relatively young architects work on the design in consultation with enthusiastic school boards, is like playtime. But once you're building a school, it's like going into battle. And that's when you need more experienced engineers and project managers".

4 types of profiles

Currently, 150 of the schools are already open. As a result, four types of profiles are permanently working on behalf of AG Real Estate to ensure that everything goes as it should. A Design Project Manager and a Build Project Manager oversee the design

174 of the 182 scheduled 'Schools for Tomorrow' have already been realised.



'Scholen van Morgen'/Schools of Tomorrow is an ambitious programme to design, construct and conduct the 30-year maintenance of 182 schools in Flanders. The Government of Flanders and BNP Paribas Fortis entrusted this important task to AG Real Estate.

The project developer set up a constructive public private partnership for this, acting in several capacities in this context, including as an investor, provider of long-term finance and principal.

and build process respectively, although there are project managers who do both. The competence centre and its team of specialists works across the board, troubleshooting when issues arise with utilities or water, gas, energy connections etc. Once the building has been completed and is in use, the maintenance contract managers oversee its maintenance.

Since then, 174 of the 182 'Schools of Tomorrow' have been completed. Another eight are currently under construction and five should be completed by the end of this year. In October 2021, two maintenance contract managers were still working full-time for AG Real Estate. They jointly oversee 53 projects: Tom Foré is responsible for 28 projects in East and West Flanders. He takes care of condition measurement, control and the follow-up of maintenance contracts. Stijn Hannaert does the same in Antwerp, Limburg and Brussels. They have been working at MULTI.engineering for 5 and 4 years respectively.

Account Manager Katja Baert was on board from the start. Philippe Monserez has nothing but praise for her: "Katja has been our contact for years. She is extremely professional and takes her responsibility seriously when it comes to the AG Real Estate account. She knows us through and through."

MULTI.engineering: an obvious choice

Philippe Monserez is just as satisfied with the employees that work on the project. He especially appreciates the stability of the relationship.

"MULTI.engineering makes a sustained effort to guarantee this", says Wouter. "With training but also by paying attention to the work/life balance. Where possible, we deploy employees in the region where they live". AG Real Estate also builds team spirit among project managers. One day a week they spend the day in the central office in Brussels, taking care of admin, followed by a joint information session or training. Or they celebrate a milestone with drinks and a bite to eat.

Philippe Monserez is keen to stress that he is very satisfied with the quality that MULTI.engineering provides, given the challenging brief. But MULTI.engineering wants to improve and deepen its expertise, to be able to handle even more complex projects. The business was recently narrowed down to focus even more on project management. Instead of a high-end supermarket, MULTI.engineering wants to become a speciality store. "I'm very curious to sample the delicatessen", Philippe Monserez says with a wink.

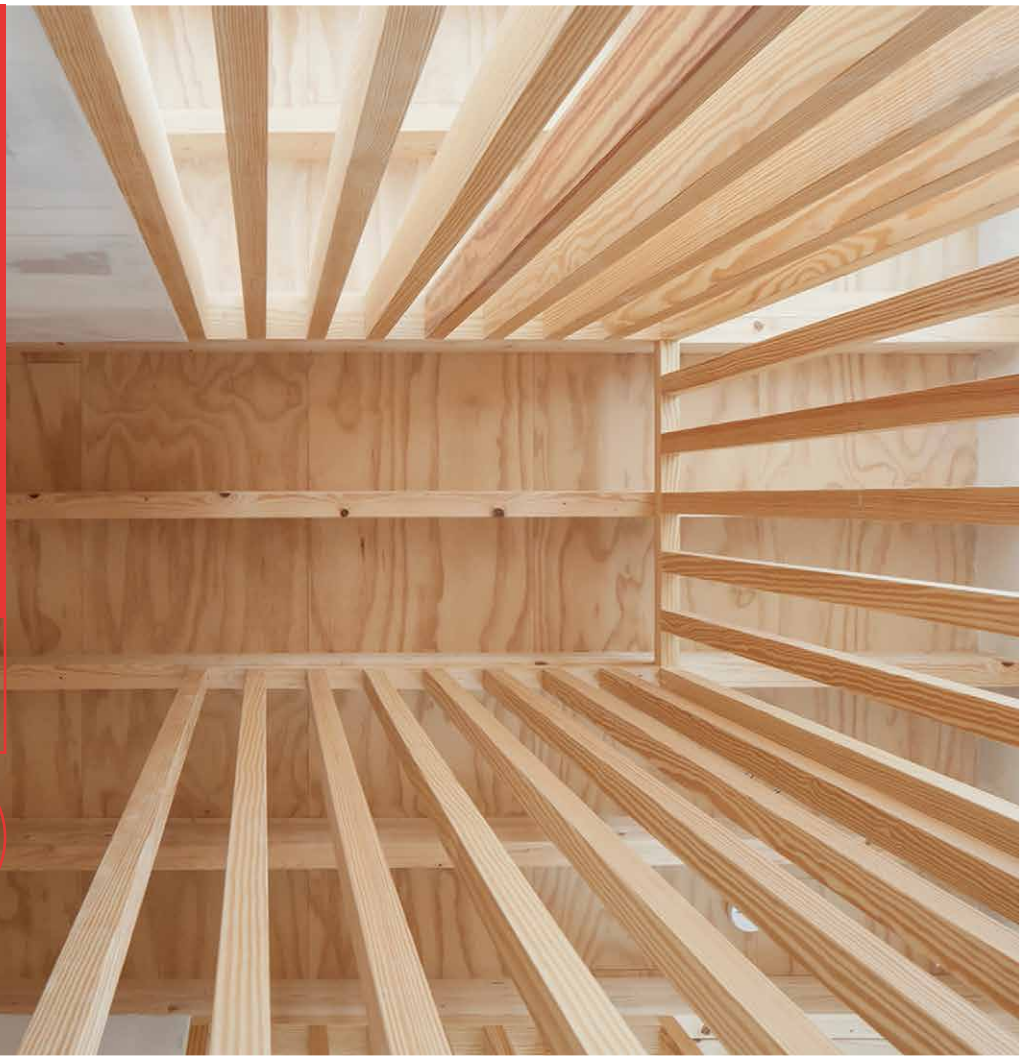
www.scholenvanmorgen.be

MULTI.engineering offers flexible engineering solutions for construction and infrastructure projects. Here are some recent examples:

AG VESPA
Upgrade of urban neighbourhoods

VESPA, Antwerp's autonomous municipal corporation for real estate projects, manages the city's real estate. It renovates vacant and run-down buildings to put them back on the market as high-quality and sustainable homes.
MULTI.engeering provides assistance, contributing to the momentum and upgrade of several Antwerp neighbourhoods.

multi.engineering/bouw-infra/projecten/ag-vespa-stedelijk-grond-en-pandenbeleid



Pictures: Johnny Umans

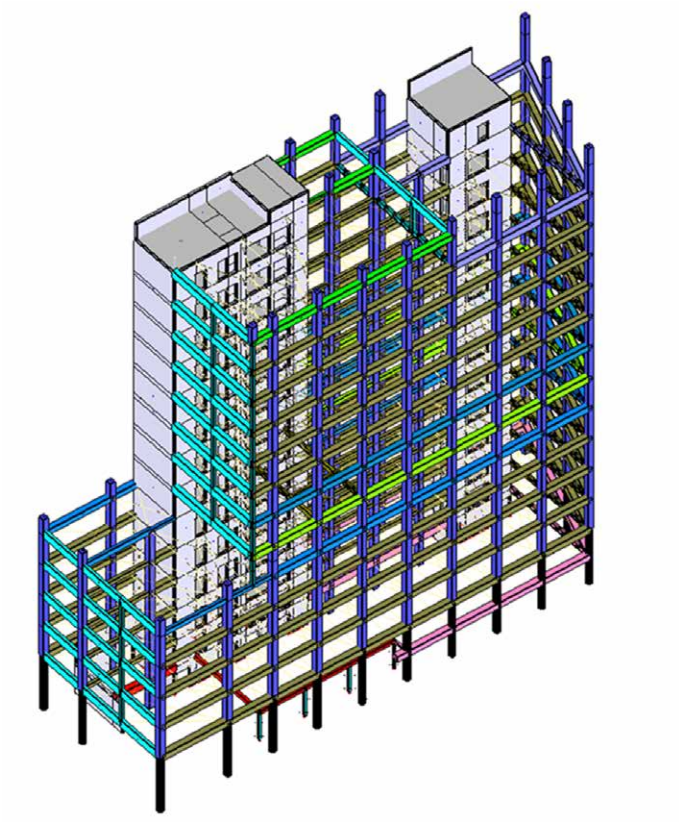
Pictures : Johnny Umans

Johnny Umans

FRAEYE
Stability study for the Daikin Geronemo newbuild

At the request of Takenaka, Fraeye engineers was tasked with the stability study for the newbuild offices and research labs for Daikin Europe in Zwijnaarde. The 56-metre tall building will become a new landmark along the E40 motorway.

www.fraeyest-abiliteit.be/projecten/daikin-geronemo



project
Gent Sint-Pieters

https://multi.engineering/bouw-infra/projecten/knoop-punt-van-duurzame-mobiliteit

DE LIJN / GENT SINT-PIETERS
Sustainable mobility hub

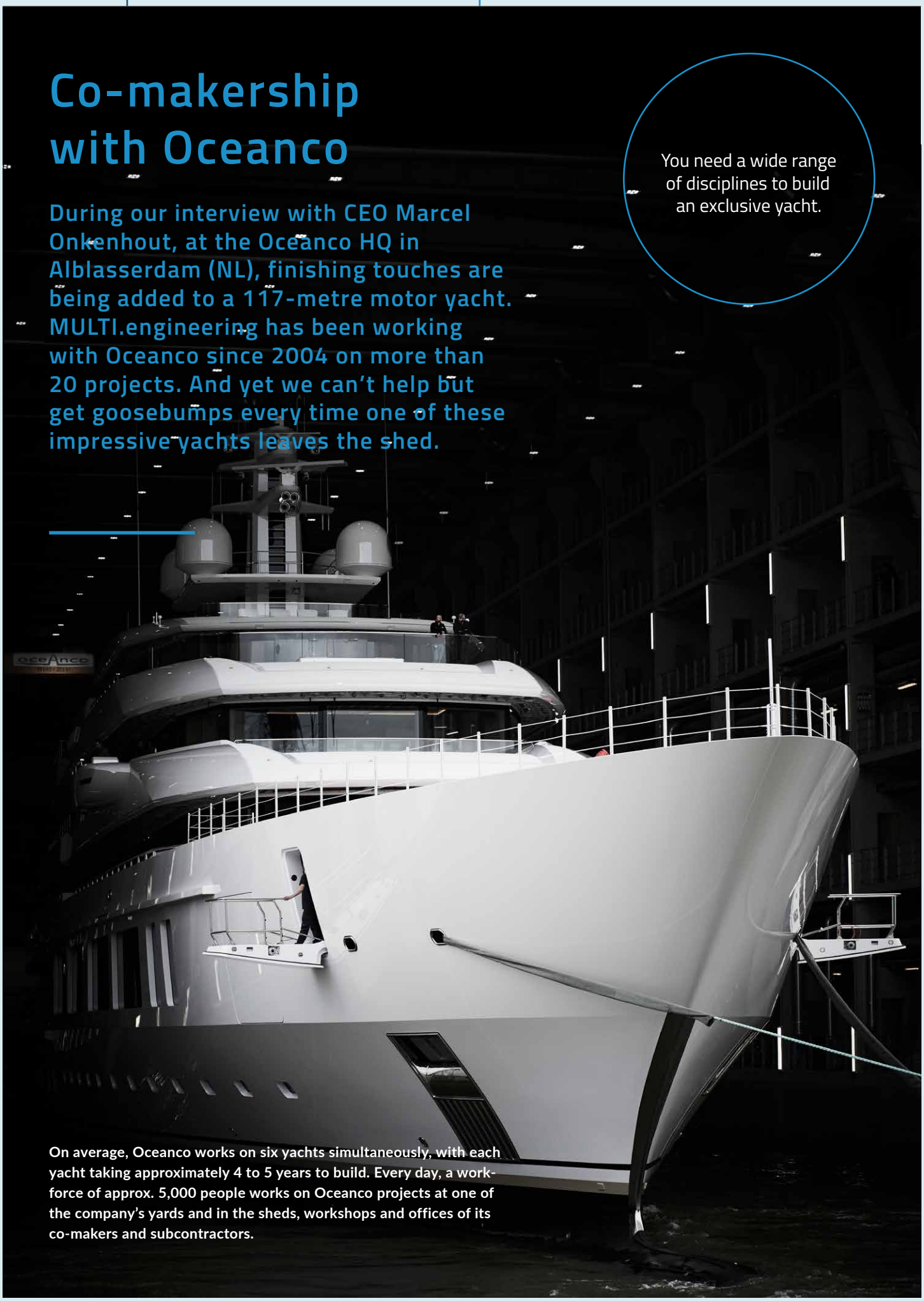
The project includes the conversion of Flanders' largest station into a contemporary multimodal public transport hub. The environment is also being transformed into a pleasant and sustainable living and working environment.

Our expert is responsible for project management on behalf of public transport company De Lijn.

Co-makership with Oceanco

During our interview with CEO Marcel Onkenhout, at the Oceanco HQ in Alblasserdam (NL), finishing touches are being added to a 117-metre motor yacht. MULTI.engineering has been working with Oceanco since 2004 on more than 20 projects. And yet we can't help but get goosebumps every time one of these impressive yachts leaves the shed.

You need a wide range of disciplines to build an exclusive yacht.



On average, Oceanco works on six yachts simultaneously, with each yacht taking approximately 4 to 5 years to build. Every day, a workforce of approx. 5,000 people works on Oceanco projects at one of the company's yards and in the sheds, workshops and offices of its co-makers and subcontractors.

WHAT DISTINGUISHES A YACHT BUILDER FROM A COMMERCIAL SHIPYARD?

Commercial shipyards build vessels that are expected to generate money, whereas yachts are not built for economic or technical profit. The only thing that counts is comfort and quality of life. That's why flexibility is so crucial for a yacht builder. You must be able to fulfil your customer's expectations and wishes, even if they change during the construction process. This requires yacht builder employees to be emotionally invested in—and committed to—their job.

WHAT MAKES OCEANCO SO UNIQUE AS A YACHT BUILDER?

We are pioneers in a number of areas. We were the first yacht builder to move the social life on board a yacht to where it needed to be: close to the sea. Before *Alfa Nero*, no yacht builder had ever built a swimming pool on the main aft deck. Since then, this has become the standard. We never stop innovating. **That said, you can only innovate if you're prepared to work with companies that are at least as good or even better than you in specific areas.**

HOW IMPORTANT IS SUSTAINABILITY FOR YOU AND YOUR CUSTOMERS?

Extremely important! Like us, our customers make very conscious choices. In the past, yachts used to be status symbols. These days, they are an important part of our customers' family/private life. That's why owners like to be involved in the building process. But they also strive to mitigate the environmental impact of their vessel.

We now only build hybrid propulsion systems, ensuring the yachts are pre-outfitted out for the latest evolutions, with batteries and fuel cells. The question remains as to what will replace fossil fuels in the future. We are currently studying methanol and hydrogen. Which technology we choose will depend on how soon on-shore infrastructure and distribution will become available. Sailing patterns have also changed course. Our customers like to visit more remote places, such as the North Pole or the Antarctic. Ecology becomes even more important when you travel to these fragile ecosystems.

SO WHAT ARE THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS BESIDES PROPULSION?

At a technical level, we have seen changes in terms of power regeneration, which we have already incorporated in our *Black Pearl* sailing yacht. But it gets better when you can apply solar cell technology to the sails themselves. To achieve good output, you need a large surface area. With a sail area of 3,000sqm, we have enough!

Glass also offers plenty of opportunities, in terms of surfaces, location and shape. We are currently studying this, along with MULTI.engineering. Our aim is to use glass as a structural, load-bearing element on our yachts, decreasing the weight of our vessels while also creating larger transparent surfaces. I can't wait to start using glass. This is very important for our customers.

YOUR CUSTOMERS LIKE TO DREAM BIG. SO HOW DOES OCEANCO MAKE THEIR DREAMS COME TRUE?

You need a wide range of disciplines to build an exclusive yacht. And because Oceanco knows that you can't excel in everything, we prefer to outsource important work to strategic subcontractors, such as MULTI.engineering. These co-makers all work together under the Oceanco umbrella, ensuring we can tap into the best available knowledge. Moreover, co-maker packages have a high-risk profile, requiring more intensive interaction with other subcontractors. But that is one of your strengths. **We consider MULTI.engineering as a strategic partner, an extension of ourselves.** You ensure communication with other co-makers during the engineering process, combining all the variables and information at the right time.

I genuinely believe in our collaboration. The idea is that you help each other in good times, but also in bad times. In that sense, it's very similar to a marriage. (laughs).

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO ACHIEVE CO-MAKERSHIP?

Respect and trust. And it takes time to build this. Give yourselves the time to get to know each other, explore and accept

Perfection in everything

In 1994, CEO Marcel Onkenhout joined Oceanco, a modest yacht builder. The company was acquired by its current owner, Dr Mohammed Al Barwani, in 2010. Dr Barwani's philosophy and current business strategy are based on the vision that the design, engineering and building as well as life on board of an Oceanco yacht must be perfect in every respect. Since then, Oceanco has grown considerably and the company has developed a large ecosystem of co-makers and subcontractors. Like MULTI.engineering, Oceanco is a family business, founded on values such as authenticity, sincerity, respect, sustainability and reliability.

Oceanco only builds hybrid drive systems equipped with batteries and fuel cells

each other's cultural differences. Make sure that you communicate with each other on the same wavelength at all times. Every six months, we measure the performance of our co-makers, and MULTI.engineering has consistently achieved very high scores over the years.

THANKS FOR THE COMPLIMENT. SO WHAT IS MULTI.ENGINEERING'S ROLE IN THIS CO-MAKERSHIP?

Oceanco decided to partner with MULTI.engineering on projects, because of the knowledge, skill and capacity that you provide. Thanks to your wide-ranging maritime knowledge, you contribute expertise to our projects and their execution. You are a proactive co-maker that shares the same values as Oceanco, thinking along with us as part of a continuous improvement process. Our collaboration is professional, to-the-point, and very transparent. Your engineers look beyond the boundaries of their 'own' work at every level. They are intrinsically motivated to understand how and where their work influences that of others and how they can contribute to this. Engineering plays an essential role in yacht building, after all.

Over the years, we have got to know each other and appreciate one another better. As a result, we are even better attuned to each other and are becoming increasingly successful together.

"NO ENGINEERING, NO YACHT". DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS STATEMENT?

I do. These days you can't build a yacht without engineering. I still remember when systems were physically routed on-board by highly-skilled welders and mechanics. The connections were defined in the engine room and systems were built on board based on drafts. This would be simply unthinkable today. And that was just 25 years ago.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES THAT THE YACHT INDUSTRY IN GENERAL AND OCEANCO IN PARTICULAR IS FACING?

The main challenge is interaction with all the different players, which all have to provide a certain amount of information at the start of the project. If one party fails to provide information to the other on time, production efficiency decreases. Ultimately, you're in this together. If one of the partners can't keep up, this impacts the entire chain. That is the essence of co-makership. Transparency, both in terms of planning schedule and capacity, is crucial if you want co-makership to be a success. And for that you need mutual trust.

WHAT ABOUT OCEANCO'S FUTURE? WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

Oceanco will continue to specialise in custom, luxury yachts. But the product itself, as well as the entire process, including the design, engineering and yacht building, can be become more sustainable. In that sense, I am convinced that our business will evolve.

INFORMATION

www.oceancoyacht.com

CHECK OUT THE PROJECTS THAT MULTI.ENGINEERING OVERSEES AT OCEANCO AT

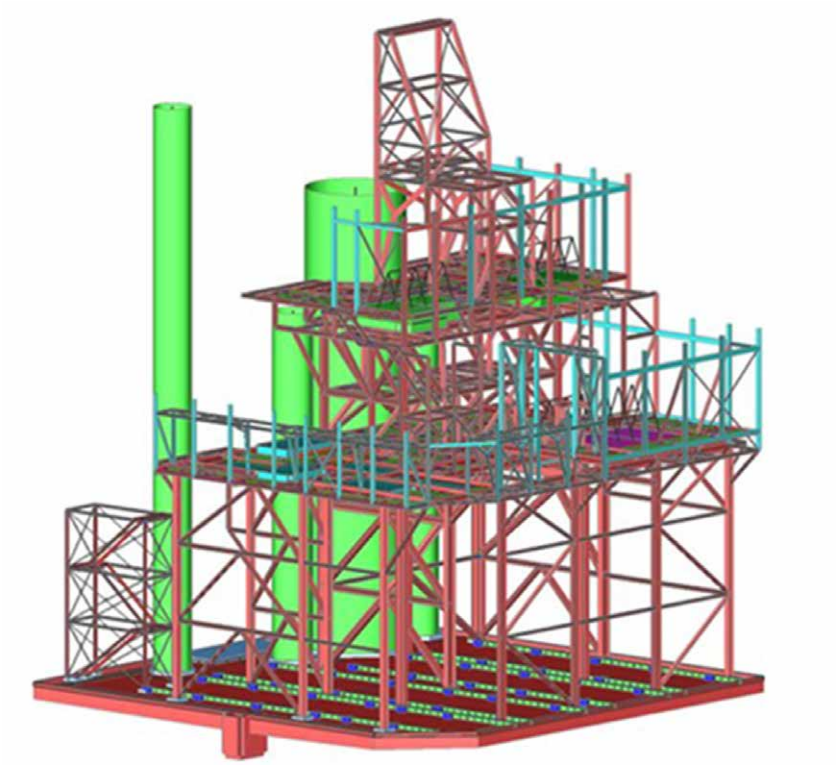
www.multi.engineering

MULTI.engineering offers flexible engineering solutions for industry projects. Here are some recent examples:

ARCELORMITTAL – STEELANOL: new facilities to reduce carbon emissions

ArcelorMittal Belgium has started to build two new ground-breaking facilities to curb carbon emissions at its site in Ghent.

MULTI.engineering was tasked with the studies and technical drawings for the construction specifications of the large foundation slabs.



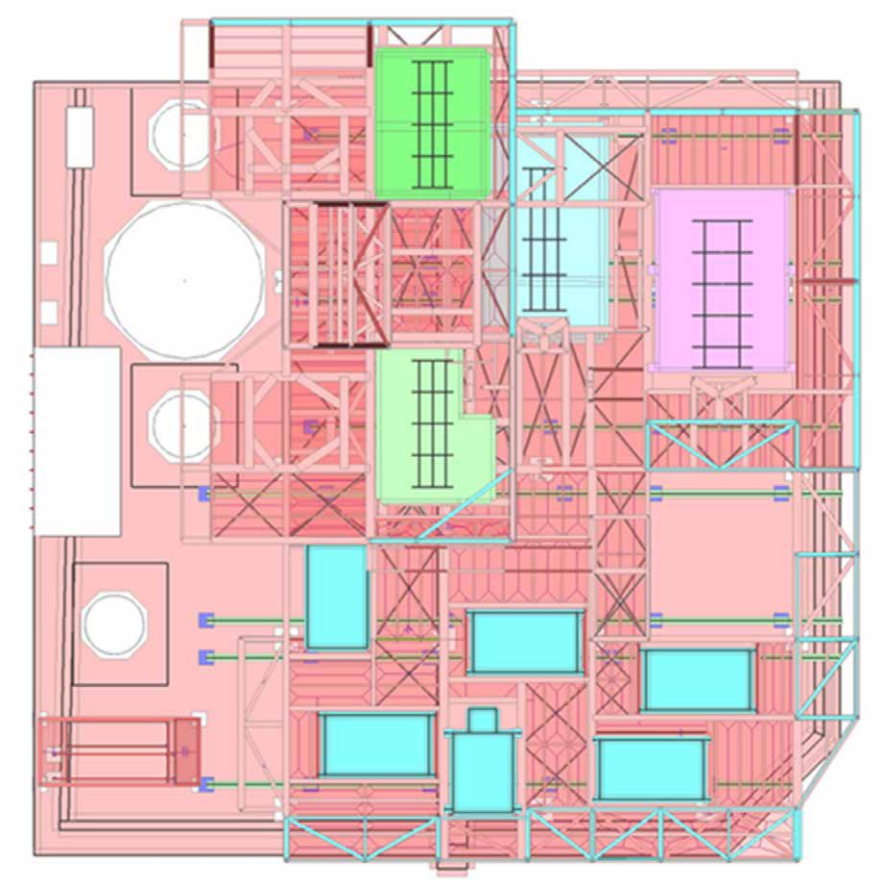
https://multi.engineering/industrie/projecten/terugdringen-van-koolstofuitstoot

Expansion of BAYER's water purification installation

Given the increasing focus on ecology, Bayer Agriculture decided to expand its water treatment plant in 2018. Part of the water is used on on-site.

Our expert was the Construction Supervisor for this project.

multi.engineering/industrie/projecten/uitbreiding-water-zuivering



multi.engineering/
industrie/projecten/
vervangen-ovens

New-generation ovens for LAMIFIL

To make production more durable, safer and more accurate, the 50-year-old ovens were replaced with an up-to-date new installation.
The old ovens were located in the heart of the factory. Production had to continue during the replacement operation.
Our expert oversaw the project management and project engineering.

WE LOVE OUR JOB BECAUSE...

...we believe that people are our company's most important capital. Their commitment and dedication make the difference! That is why we do everything we can in HR to align individual needs and motivations with our company's direction.

– VALERIE VAN BRUWAENE (left), HR MANAGER MARITIME & OFFSHORE AND TAMARA VAN MARCKE (right), HR BUSINESS PARTNER INDUSTRY, CONSTRUCTION & INFRASTRUCTURE

'Connection' is more essential than ever

As our employees' main point of contact, MULTI.engineering's HR Business Partners go that extra mile when it comes to service. In fact, they go above and beyond. HR Business Partners Valerie and Tamara share the responsibility for the three Business Units: Maritime & Offshore, Construction & Infrastructure, and Industry. In a technical industry, their focus is on the people aspect, particularly on a genuine and sincere connection. Something that has proven more important than ever in this pandemic.

The mission and vision of MULTI.engineering starts from good employment practices. In fact, these are a cornerstone of our HR policy and its operational implementation. We handle each phase (recruitment, development, retention) with the same care.

RECRUITMENT: the right employee in the right place

The HR Business Partner plays an important part in **onboarding** new employees, offering a structured, professional and personal welcome and introduction to our company. The first step in the HR cycle is the recruitment of the right people for our projects or for our own engineering offices. While **technical** knowledge is a prerequisite, we find the candidate's **soft skills** and learning ability just as important. The candidate's values also need to match ours: he or she must be reliable, helpful, engaged, focused and competent.

DEVELOPMENT: growing in your job

A good employee/employer relationship promotes mutual trust. We achieve this by actively listening to what our employees have to say. We do what we say and we say what we do. Our employees can always count on us. They deserve our 100% dedication.

We organise a wide range of interesting training sessions throughout the year, so our people can grow, in various respects. In addition to **training that is open to everyone**, MULTI.engineering also offers custom training: **our MULTI/Launch and technical training programmes**. Finally, we also invest in **individual training pathways**, with informal meetings and an annual formal training assessment to gain an insight into our employees' individual needs.

CONNECTION: continuous improvement

We keep our finger on the pulse to develop a strong relationship with employees and serve as a professional sounding board. This relationship, which MULTI.engineering—as a family business—values, is further strengthened during informal activities, such as the New Year's party, our family day, and sports activities. We also show our support and trust during life changes, such as a birthday, anniversary, wedding, birth, serious illness... with a gift or by reaching out.

What Corona does with our mind(set)

During the second pandemic wave in 2020 we have interviewed neuropsychologist Elke Geraerts on the effects of lockdown and quarantine on our minds. Based on her insights, we are happy to share some useful advise, like 'take time for some brain wandering' and 'do not underestimate the power of your own creativity'.

What were your most important findings professionally during the first lockdown and quarantine periods?

It's been a fun and interesting to see how people, worldwide, do cope with the virtual meetings and a global crisis. People did actually love the extra time and attention for their loved ones, if they were at home. However, in the beginning it was hard to manage their attention, because private life and work life were at some point all integrated and mixed up. But, after a while, most have found a way to deal with distraction making arrangements at home, e.g. how to take care of their kids.

I also think the lockdown has showed the importance of team dynamics. That you need to meet people. I hope that the concept of an office will become to be a meeting place to interact with your teams, to be social with each other.

Do you think we will return to 'business as usual' again?

I would be terrified if we would go back to business as usual. We were having many habits that we have been doing for years without questioning the effects on our energy level and happiness. For instance all the traffic jams, or the landscape offices that do distract so many employees from getting their focus on their job. This crisis had shown that we can work from home and that we can be able to focus on our priorities more and have time left for families and loved ones. So, I would hope that we take the lessons from the crisis and not go back to business as usual. Therefore it's important that as a team you discuss what the good things were from the crisis and how you can incorporate these in your work processes. For instance whether it is possible for instance to have 2 hours in a day on the work floor for focus time and the rest for the issues of the day.

Any advice for teams or individuals about this hybrid, new way of working?

Take up ownership. It doesn't mean you have to be a manager to show leadership. Instead of complaining about everything that is going wrong, especially think about what little thing you can do in your environment that can have an impact on your own happiness, productivity, energy and on others around you. This requires a certain mindset to be open to change, to positivity. By taking some time for 'mind wandering' and observing what is going on in your brain, try to detect the negative thoughts and neutralize them. Based on that, change your behaviour.

Engineers are brain workers. What habits or behaviour can we change to be a better engineer?

Question yourself on what makes you unique as a human being. I hear people being scared whether they will be needed on the work floor in 5 to 10 years and whether robots will take over. It would be interesting to look at what makes you unique as a human being and what makes you better than a robot. I call that our authentic intelligence. There's a lot in our brain that makes us unique as human beings. Investigate what qualities you have extra upon your talent for engineering. Combine those to make sure that your job is sustainable in the future. I also think most engineers would benefit from focus. These days we are too often being distracted by many devices. An engineer will benefit from full brain power to priorities. So I recommend to reserve more focus time and to create connection between colleagues. Sometimes step away from your devices and just talk to human beings. And finally do not underestimate our ability to be creative. Creativity is in our brain. It's not a personality trait. It's just an ability to let your brain associate between the different senses and come up with creative ideas. This means getting away from devices, just listening to your own brain, trying to connect the dots around you and the most creative ideas happen. That is what makes us really human, distinguishing us from robots.

ELKE GERAERTS *is a neuropsychologist who has been an academic for 10 years, working at Mustard University, Harvard, Saint-Andrews and Rotterdam. Since 8 years her company 'Better Minds at Work' helps people and companies to improve their resilience and mental wellbeing focusing on our minds. Her mission is having a positive impact on human beings and society.*

"It's important that as a team you discuss what the good things were from the crisis and how you can incorporate these in your work processes."

Bianca Derweduwen (l) en Sabine Baecke (r)

NAME: Bianca Derweduwen
FUNCTION: Business Communication and Marketing Coordinator
AGE: "Forever young in my mind"

Bianca is married to Dieter and has three children: Arno (27), Kayla (25) and Rudyard (19).

FAVOURITE PASTIME: Concerts, parties, and enjoying a beer on a café terrace.

NAME: Sabine Baecke
FUNCTION: Maritime & Offshore Support Manager and health & safety advisor
AGE: A twenty-something with a spring in her step and 45 years of experience

Sabine lives with Bert and has three children: Emma (22), Viktor (20) and Cato (13).

FAVOURITE PASTIME: reading, cooking, travelling, enjoying good times with family and friends.

Sabine Baecke & Bianca Derweduwen

Sabine and Bianca, who have 21 and 16 years of experience respectively at MULTI.engineering, are among the mainstays of our company. These two spirited women hope to stay on board for many years to come.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN EACH OTHER?

BIANCA: Sabine had been at MULTI.engineering for five years when I joined the company. I ended up working in a very close-knit team. We shared our office with Wouter, our director. That was a completely new way of working for me—no distance between management and the employees—and I liked it from the outset. I hit it off with Sabine and my other colleagues from day 1.

SABINE: We have known each other for 16 years and we've always worked very well together. In fact, we still do. We don't really see each other outside of work but we know each other sufficiently well to know that we can count on each other.

DO YOU THINK THAT YOUR COLLEAGUES HAVE A GOOD IDEA OF WHAT YOUR JOB ENTAILS?

BIANCA: I think so, although they don't always realise how much it involves. I'm responsible for all communication through social media, the website, mailshots and newsletters, this magazine, etc. This also includes the follow-up and analysis of all this communication as well as helping to organise events, buying promotional materials and much more. I also provide support to our Sourcing Consultants.

SABINE: My job essentially involves being a jack of all trades, a problem solver. Everyone knows where to find me. "Don't know the answer? Just ask Sabine." 🙂 My job is extremely diverse: I'm responsible for health & safety, provide support to Maritime & Offshore for admin and legal documents, budget follow-up and housing, drawing up and overseeing the various (facility) contracts, following up on the fleet, the organisation of events such as lunch@theoffice, Slip on a Sweater day, Plastic-Free May, etc. This is not limited to our office in Temse. Every week, I also meet with Ilona and Marlène, my two lovely colleagues in our offices in Vlissingen and Breda. They are responsible for on-site support. I'm also responsible for part of the accounts and take care of all HR matters for our Service Team. Recently, I took on another task, namely the follow-up of all marketing for Maritime & Offshore. As I said, a jack of all trades.

"The faith that people have in us inspires us to continually raise the bar."

– BIANCA

"She always knows what I mean."

– SABINE

HOW DO YOU COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER?

BIANCA: Now that Sabine and I are jointly responsible for the marketing and communication for Maritime & Offshore, we can work more closely together. She chases the account managers and management, making my job easier as a result.

SABINE: She always knows what I mean. Bianca takes my rough ideas and texts, then uses her skills and expertise to polish them and turn them into something better.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE THE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB AT MULTI.ENGINEERING?

BIANCA: I really enjoy the autonomy, the flexibility and the atmosphere at work. Because people have faith in you, you continually raise the bar, because you want to be worthy of their trust. The company also pays a lot of attention to work/life balance. MULTI.engineering is a very human workplace.

SABINE: I agree with everything she said. I also get a boost from colleagues who appreciate my assistance and help with solutions.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO COLLEAGUES WHO JOIN THE COMPANY?

BIANCA: I'd say they made a smart choice. 🙂

SABINE: Dare to ask questions, there are no stupid questions. Grab every opportunity to learn (a lot) but tell us where we can make improvements. We are definitely open to feedback.

WHAT DO YOU STILL DREAM OF IN YOUR CAREER?

Interesting to note that they both gave the same answer: "Staying satisfied with our job, continuing to tackle the many challenges, and achieve many other great things, together with our colleagues."

How wonderful!

With 'MULTI/Launch' we are committed to personal development

In addition to our open training programme, MULTI.engineering has been offering 'MULTI/Launch' for over 10 years. This custom training package ranges from practical to soft skills.

For each newly graduated bachelor or master who joins MULTI.engineering, we map out a personal training path: **MULTI/Launch**. This programme features a certain number of one- and two-day training sessions over the course of one year, ending with an individual coaching session. In this context, the coach focuses mainly on soft skills, such as conflict management, communication and feedback techniques, as well as the basics of project management.

For more experienced employees (aged 30+) we have '**MULTI/Launch²**', which addresses (personal) leadership and connecting communication. If desired, we add project management to the mix.

IN THE PICTURE

Remote management

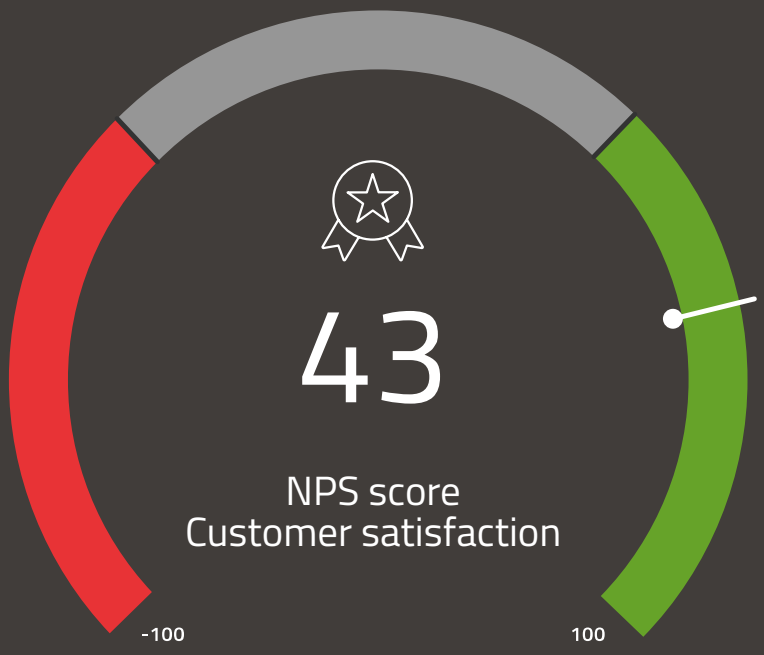
When your team is abroad or teleworking is mandatory, leadership becomes extra challenging. That is why our Support Manager Sabine Baecke opted for the course 'Remote management', which is part of our open training programme.

SABINE: "At the heart of great leadership, is trust. We learned about four types of employees and how every type requires a different approach. It was a nice addition to the other MULTI.engineering courses I've completed. Especially the practical cases were very enlightening. I'll certainly be using these insights in my daily work."

Happy engineers, happy customers!

We received a lot of response to our annual client survey, and moreover the highest score ever, from both customers and employees. That motivates us to continue to provide you with extra good service!

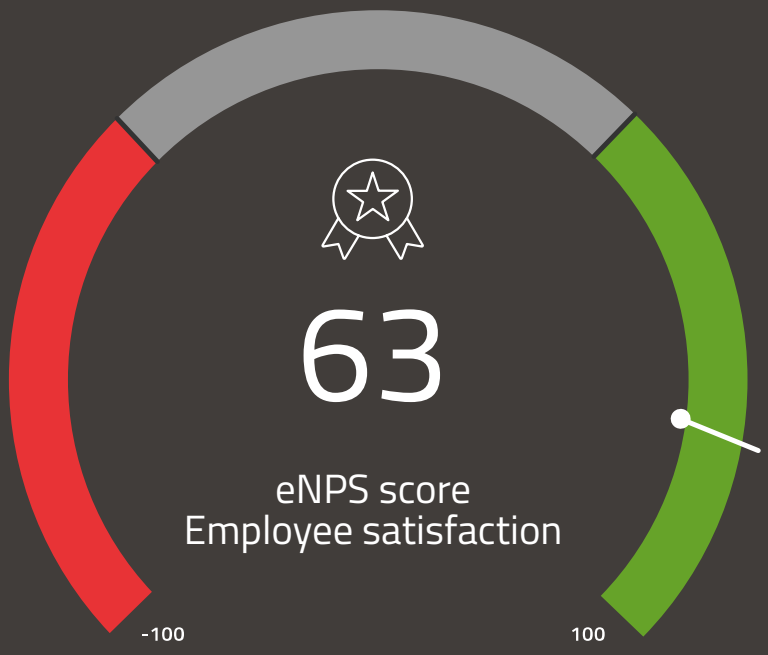
Your loyalty is invaluable and we are pleased that our NPS (Net Promoter Score, a method of measuring loyalty) has grown to 43. All results above 30 are considered 'very good'.



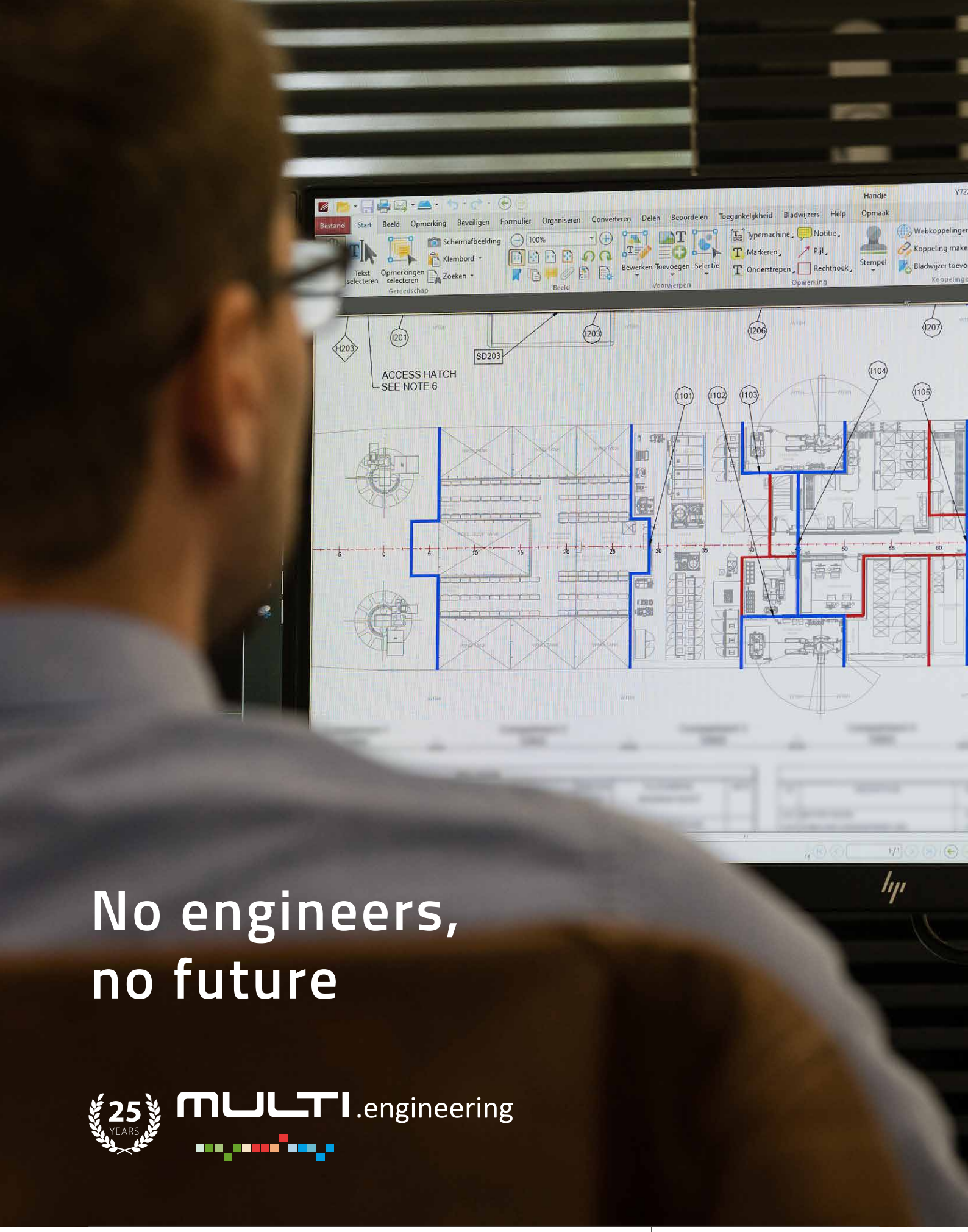
And what about our employees?

The MULTI team gives an average of 8.2 / 10 for satisfaction and a Net Promoter Score of 63. That is a nice increase compared to previous years, and definitely a trend to continue.

Surely, satisfied employees will also benefit you, our client!



THANK YOU FROM MULTI.ENGINEERING! THESE RESULTS STRENGTHEN US TO TAKE YOU FURTHER. THEY ARE EFFECTIVE AND DOMINANT PROOF THAT WE'RE ON THE RIGHT TRACK TO SUPPORT YOU AS A COMMITTED AND RELIABLE PARTNER.



No engineers, no future

25 YEARS

MULTI.engineering

Contact

www.multi.engineering
info@multi.engineering