



COLUMN

Impactful encounters

Saskia Eijkelhof & Marc Klein Wolt

Connections are vital to transformation, change and personal growth – especially in the realms of innovative startups and science. In this column, Saskia Eijkelhof (EnginX) and Marc Klein Wolt share their experiences of crossing paths and the ways in which it impacted their careers and personal lives.



“I want to be able to do the job I love and be a mom to my daughter.”

Saskia Eijkelhof, CEO EnginX

For almost ten years, one of the co-founders of EnginX worked at Radboud University with Marc Klein Wolt, my co-host for this column. At the time, EnginX needed someone who could connect things, drive the business forward and translate the technical information into a comprehensible story. Marc put him in touch with Mercator Launch, where I was working at the time. With my marketing and business background, it sounded like an awesome opportunity. After an initial commercial role, I got to take over as CEO. I said yes, and in no time, we had two pilot customers, funding, and a lot of interest: I decided to jump in.

Unique software

EnginX is the first company to develop this type of software. Currently, the engineering process consists of a variety of tasks, such as drawing, calculating, and simulating – and for each task, there’s a different software program. In addition, many things are still done manually, such as the subsequent process of simulating in 2D and 3D, finding the components and parts and sending them to the purchasing department. EnginX brings it all together: in our tool engineers can do everything at once, largely automated with AI, making the engineering process faster, smarter, and easier to transfer knowledge.

Green energy

In the future, I hope that EnginX will become the new standard for engineering that contributes to the energy transition. Everything needs to be more sustainable and more energy efficient. That’s where our software can play a crucial role, and it’s already doing so in the maritime industry. Soon, the first ship that is designed and built using the EnginX software will set sail. The engineers of this so-called ‘hydrogen ship’ have used EnginX to design and build a new fuel system that will allow it to sail on green alternatives instead of fossil fuels.

“Soon, the first ship that is designed and built using the EnginX software will set sail.”

Amber

The role of CEO suits me very well. Working for a start-up is fun and intense, and you have to keep both feet firmly on the ground. I enjoy the freedom to set my own agenda; the traditional nine-to-five mindset doesn’t work for me. Also, because, next to my work, I am a mother to my two-year-old daughter, Amber. Being a CEO and being a mother are vastly different things, but I combine them in a healthy way where possible. I’ve learned that the most important thing is to prioritise; I want Amber to see that I’m doing what I love, and at the same time I can be there for her as a mum.



“EnginX could play a major role in Engineering 2.0.”

Marc Klein Wolt, Director Radboud Radio Lab, Radboud University

The Radboud Radio Lab employs people from many different backgrounds. Our colleagues have a wide range of interests and education, and I had a student who fit the bill. He wanted to see if he could do something in business and put his theories into practice. That’s how EnginX was born.

Space for talent

I like to help people grow. It gives me a lot of personal pleasure and I think it is also one of our roles as a university. This is how EnginX came into being: I saw a student with a huge gift, but who at the time needed to find out more about himself and his abilities. By giving him some space, we were able

to contribute to this success story. And in addition to personal growth, it also allows us as a university to valorise technological innovations. It makes me proud to see where this has already led for EnginX.

Success commercially

Saskia has driven the growth of EnginX’s business. Her commercial talents are a great complement to the technical skills and knowledge among staff, students, and scholars. This is also one of the success factors of EnginX: they allow everyone to nurture their unique and individual strengths. Everyone does what they’re good at. By combining this variation of skills, both business and technical, EnginX has found its niche market: they have identified a need, created a solution, and found a launching customer.

“Saskia has driven the growth of EnginX’s business.”

Engineering 2.0

My vision is for EnginX to continue to grow in the aerospace industry. Their technology could perfectly be used to build rocket engines and satellites. But the space world is very conservative and requires a serious track record if you want to set a new standard. That’s what EnginX is doing right now: building a track record. People need to see and experience EnginX’s solution to design, calculate and evaluate objects in virtual reality – resulting in huge savings in cost and time. This is where EnginX can play a role in Engineering 2.0.