

# Navigating Successful US Expansion, Together

*Insights from leading entrepreneurs, a welcome from the Dutch Consul General himself, and conversation over a cold Heineken; just an expectedly perfect evening with the Dutch startup community.*

Situated in the vast, inspiring corridors of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, B. New York City is New York's official landing space for global tech and creative companies entering the US market. Not to mention, it provides the ideal environment for official meetups of industry greats.

On Monday, December 11, Halve Maen, in partnership with the Dutch Consulate, welcomed the international entrepreneur community to B. New York City for a head-first dive into workshops and a panel discussion navigating topics that all startups struggle with at some point; international readiness, setting up shop, recruiting and retaining talent, signing a first client, grassroots marketing, partnerships, and more. Each conversation was hosted by a notable in their field, offering opportunity for all attendees to receive insights first hand. The gathering was an official warm up to The Next Web NYC, an exclusive event designed for decision-makers looking to explore the digital technologies transforming Tech, Communication, and Media businesses.

The Halve Maen initiative encourages innovators to cross the bridges of soft landing in the US together. Over the course of the scheduled sessions, seasoned entrepreneurs guided new pioneers in being ready for the process- sharing best practices, showcasing success, and celebrating failure.

## **What are a few of our favorite takeaways from Halve Maen's first official gathering?**

- 1. Entering the US is hard work:** "So many people come to NY with big plans. And after two or three meetings they go back and have realized it is very hard. So you really need to be in it for the long run." *Ricardo van Loenen, Founder – B.Amsterdam, B.New York City*
- 2. Get connected:** "If you know a guy that knows a guy who knows a guy, then you get a good price." *Chris de Visser, Sana Commerce*

**3. Negotiating in the US is a different ball game:** “You need to offer one third of the original price and then maybe you’re getting somewhere. Americans see how far they can push it in negotiations. We’re not used to negotiating this much.” *van Loenen*

**4. Meet the American worker:** “You could say that people are more opportunistic here. If they can make ten bucks somewhere else, they’re gone. They also make bigger decisions faster than we do in The Netherlands. In New York, people cannot separate work and life.” *de Visser*

**5. Find work ethic:** “You really need someone on the ground that you trust. You need to account for differences in time and work ethics. The entire company needs to be willing to go to the US in order to make it a success.” *de Visser*

**6. “Prepare but don’t over prepare, just get out there and do it.”** *Attendee Roos Hofland, Innovation Booster*

**7. “Prove your business value** with a pilot or a preview. When that works, expand that.” *Matt Decaussin, TechStars*

**8. Test the market:** “For example, run a social media campaign in the region you want to expand to, to see if there’s any interest at all.” *Jessica Vollman, The Vollman Group*

**9. Be ready:** “If they do give you the order, you need to be ready to deliver those amounts. Be ready with support and ready for the competition.” *Jacob Willemsen, TABS*

**10. “Don’t get comfortable in NYC.** Comfort means anyone can catch up.” *de Visser*

The shared knowledge continued in relaxed and positive Dutch spirit. Tech and creative entrepreneurs, both old and new, some in town for the following day’s The Next Web event and others dedicated members of the startup ecosystem, mingled and networked over savory bites and cold drinks; sharing experience and celebrating a space where others are ready to know the answers to your very same questions.

Ready to join the industry’s finest and most hungry? Join us for our next event!

Meet the Speakers From the Workshop:

Matt Decaussin - Business Development, TechStars

Justin Kreamer – Vice President, New York City Economic Development Corporation Prof.

Jonathan Askin – Founder and Director, Brooklyn Law Incubator & Policy Clinic Jessica

Vollman – Founder, The Vollman Group

From the Panel:

Moderated by: Boris Veldhuijzen van Zanten – CEO & Co-founder, The Next Web Ricardo van Loenen – CEO & Co-founder, B.Building Business Chris de Visser – GM North America, Sana Commerce Jacob Willemsen – Founder, TABS

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