

# Dutch Founders Speak on Successful US Expansion



On Wednesday, May 30, Halve Maen partners B. Building Business and the Consulate General of the Netherlands in New York coordinated a learning and networking event in B.'s Amsterdam location. Attributing to Halve Maen's mission to create a soft-landing for Dutch startups looking to enter the US via NYC, the event was a true showcase of the strength of the Dutch networks abroad. The evening featured a discussion guided by a start and scale-up expert in town from NYC, as well as a panel of four experienced Dutch founders who have successfully expanded their business to the US.

Starting with a short presentation from Matt Listro of Harbinger Strategy - a firm that works with European founders to help quickly accelerate growth in the U.S- the conversation took a quick dive into the nuances associated with initiating business stateside. Listro worked through topics including the high cost of the American employee, the need for processes, the likelihood of longer sales cycles, and prevalence of hierarchical layers.

Listro's insights set the stage for the flip-side experiences as told by an intimate panel of Dutch founders. Moderated by Dennis Tan, CEO and Co-founder of Dashmote, the panel included Steven van Wel, CEO and Co-founder of Karma; Roel Jansen, CCO Usabilla; and Paul van Hattem, Founder and Creative Director of Mr. Prezident. The conversation highlighted different experiences, methodologies, and growth stages, but there was a common focus on the importance of doing your homework, involving an American in your hiring, having scalable processes, and connecting with the local Dutch post in NYC for a direct connection into the ecosystem.

In addition to the group's collective tip to ride on the US's love for Dutch design and Dutch startups and really play the "Dutch card", our panelists offered a few pieces of advice to consider when tapping into the US.

"Have substantial funding to support in hiring processes. I would have liked to be more American when it comes to hiring- hire fast, fire faster. You have to be more like that than you are used to when working in the US, and that's easier if you have more money in the bank." Roel Jansen, CCO Usabilla

"Just go- don't be scared! Spend some real time in the city you're considering, and connect with the consulate for support. They help get you on the right track." Paul van Hattem, Founder and Creative Director of Mr. Prezident

"If you're fundraising, know your audience, do your homework, and be clear on why you're entering those meetings. Be ready to answer when a VC asks the question how can I help?" Steven van Wel, CEO and Co-founder of Karma

The evening rounded off with networking drinks and one-on-one discussions between aspiring expanders, experienced founders, and industry and government experts.

For more events initiated by the Halve Maen partnership, visit our [events](#) page. Dutch Founders Speak on Successful US Expansion

