

## **The Netherlands Shares**

*“The Netherlands Shares is the first general website of cooperating sharing platforms, where everyone in the Netherlands and safely borrow or rent stuff, tools, jobs and more.”*

### **1. Introduction**

The Netherlands Shares is the first one-stop-shop sharing platform in the Netherlands where people can go to share almost everything. The unique thing about this concept is that it collaborates with existing platforms. In the sharing economy, it is about connecting and collaborating, so why don't platforms do that?

Via The Netherlands Shares, Dutch sharing platforms join forces. Thus, together, they increase the success of their own sharing platforms and the success of the sharing economy in general. The Netherlands Shares was launched in October 2015.

### **2. Principles**

The primary objective of The Netherlands Shares is to join forces and work together. This stimulates the sharing economy in the Netherlands. Besides collaborating, sharing is obviously a central part. By sharing, we are effectively dealing with what is already there: products are being used and no new things are purchased, however, it is possible for everyone to use something without having to purchase it. This reduces the need for new products to be produced thereby reducing usage of raw materials.

Sharing also contributes to social cohesion. Sharing or doing chores for each other enables a person to become more familiar with their neighbors which can increase safety in the area, according to research.

### **3. Design**

The Netherlands Shares is the initiative of a number of Dutch sharing platforms including Croqger and FLOW2. From their perspective: "If you cannot share, you cannot multiply." They have decided to join forces to work together to make the sharing economy accessible to all individuals, companies, and civil and public organizations in the Netherlands. By joining forces, they are leading by example ("practice what you preach").

The initiators are partners in Exploitiemaatschappij The Netherlands shares BV, the organization that implements the objectives of the foundation The Netherlands Shares for its own account and risk. The idea originated in December 2014. From that moment until mid-October 2015, The Netherlands Shares has been actively engaged in the development of the business plan, building the website, and taking the first steps in business development. The Netherlands Shares website was launched in late October 2015. The basic principle is that access and use are more important than possession. The platform itself is set up based on this

principle: the website is hosted by one of the sharing platforms and other existing sharing platforms are also being used.

Participating platforms become co-owner or participate in The Netherlands Shares, the first general sharing platform of the Netherlands. Their users are now afforded the opportunity to share more than just material items, chores, boats, knowledge, or meals. Any possibility of sharing is facilitated by the platform. Currently, the transaction forms consist of lease, loan, sell, swap, and give away. The transaction means currently consist of money and Bitcoins (a form of block chain).

#### **4. Value Proposition**

Sharing is 'the new owning'. The Netherlands Shares provides social innovation from ownership to usage and from property to access. The idea originated from the drive to give people the opportunity to share with each other, to get to know each other better, and to do so at a local level - strengthening social cohesion - in the neighborhood and the region. The initiators see opportunities for innovation in the economic sector by realizing the first general sharing website and cooperating sharing platforms on which everyone can share anything in the Netherlands.

Supply and/or demand of the sharing platform are also visible on [www.heelnederlanddeelt.nl](http://www.heelnederlanddeelt.nl). If anyone visits HNLD and finds a job, a boat, a meal, a house, or anything from the sharing platform, they are redirected thus supplying additional users on the sharing platform. Users creating an account directly on The Netherlands Shares or users who created an account on other platforms share items, chores, and other things thereby also sharing what is earned; it's a win-win situation for everyone.

The Netherlands Shares is the first general sharing platform of collaborating sub websites. The concept has a high reproduction factor. The technique is easy to copy; the reputation and the network are less easy to copy.

The sharing platform provides both sides with financial benefits. First, it saves the customer money and, on the other hand, the provider can earn money. It also provides for social needs. By sharing locally, you become more familiar with your neighbors and thus strengthen social cohesion in the city, village, district, or neighborhood. Moreover, it contributes to a more sustainable society by dealing more efficiently with what we already have. Fewer new things are purchased, therefore, fewer new things need to be produced, and this saves energy and raw materials. Finally, it is contributing to the local environment through sharing locally.

The purpose of The Netherlands Shares is to allow people from a neighborhood to be introduced to sharing in an accessible way. For this, they later introduced "Family Dilt". The Dilt family is central in communication and will become *the* sharing family of the Netherlands. In the form of a comic book, the family experiences all types of adventures. This way, also in communication, the social aspect of sharing is central. It's about the family feeling but in a neighborhood or district.

## **5. Community**

The community, among other things, consists of the sharing platforms, residents of the Netherlands, businesses, municipalities, organizations such as CSR Netherlands and Kracht van the Netherlands and local initiatives such as sports clubs, associations, and local healthcare organizations. The community began by approaching the various sub-platforms. From this collaboration, the already existing communities of pre-existing platforms could be incorporated into the community of The Netherlands Shares.

For the sharing platforms, it is interesting to work together as this will increase the community. They are not losing their customers; in fact, they are offering customers additional services by also sharing other things from the joint sharing platforms. In addition, the platforms maintain their own income.

Communication is performed in different ways. Through the existing sharing platforms, users are being informed of the initiative of The Netherlands Shares. There is a two brand strategy that is being followed: the brand has its own communication, and the sharing platform also announces that they are part of The Netherlands Shares. From The Netherlands Shares, a separate communication strategy is established in which the Netherlands is informed of the existence of The Netherlands Shares. Local initiatives are making members enthusiastic through a media kit that The Netherlands Shares has made available. The Netherlands Shares mainly plays a facilitating role.

The Netherlands Shares has been launched nationwide, however, the sharing economy succeeds or fails with personal attention offline. Currently, the search for local community managers has begun who, together with the Netherlands Shares, will make their county-shares website successful in their own town/region. In Oisterwijk and Bladel, the community managers have already begun working. Ongoing conversations are taking place with community managers in The Hague, Utrecht, Lansingerland, and Amsterdam. The community managers must take care of local awareness and motivation, helping the sharing economy to grow faster.

## **6. Results**

Sharing all types of things has multiple positive results. Because things are being shared, there is less consumerism and, therefore, decreased production. This has resulted in less raw materials being used. The sharing contributes to social cohesion.

For every financial transaction that occurs among consumers, 20% is for The Netherlands Shares on any rental value of 10 Euros or more. Business users pay for ads. The Netherlands Shares offers several subscription forms: five ads for 25 Euro up to 300 Euro for unlimited.

At the time of this writing, approximately 7500 accounts are active, and almost 25,000 ads have been placed.

## 7. Conclusion

The purpose of The Netherlands Shares is working together with existing sharing platforms in order to join forces and, through one common sharing platform, make the sharing economy accessible to everyone and everywhere. By cooperating and joining forces, a sharing platform emerges that further improves the sharing economy throughout the Netherlands and, on a local level, contributes to social cohesion and sustainability in each municipality.

By working together instead of setting up a platform themselves, The Netherlands Shares proves that the owner herself believes in the concept. The wheel does not have to be reinvented and, by sharing content, users together create a win-win situation.

This business model is scalable and viable. The circular economy is growing! In the future, the initiators hope that eventually, for example, a "Spain Shares" website will be initiated.

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