



## Carel van Duuren, CEO

### The Pillar of Strength Behind True Modular Building

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An extensive career trajectory spanning diverse industries led Carel van Duuren to his passion, the building industry. True Modular Building (TMB) is a spin-off and evolution of Carel's previous companies and his volumetric and modular manufacturing expertise. As the CEO of the company, his leadership played an instrumental role in making all the volumetric modular container projects more adaptable. In 2023, Carel changed the name of the company from NxtGen Houses to True Modular Building, ensuring all buildings are designed and constructed according to the TMB principles.

Having been honored with the ***"Thought Leadership Award 2025"*** by The CEO Views, Carel shares with us his incredible leadership journey with TMB and his vision for the company in the next decade.

#### Way to the Passion

Born on November 21st, 1952, in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, Carel Van Duuren has been married for 51 years, has a daughter and son, and four grandchildren. As an industry veteran, Carel upholds expertise across engineering, developing, patented technology, business development, and CEO and CFO experience. He has worked for 12 years in international auditing, 6 years as a CFO/CEO in retail/manufacturing, and built his first company, Kairos Business Support, in 1993. Working as an interim CEO or CFO for 20 years at various companies, Carel helped them regain their profitability.

He believed in his heart that one does not find one's passion; the passion finds the one. A similar thing happened to him when Carel came to know about the global housing crisis and the way the building industry works, a passion that shaped his leadership. Based on the TMB principle, he started developing kitchens for universities, businesses, conventions, and events

with the companies Kessel Rental and NxtGen Smart Modular Building.

#### The Idea Behind True Modular Building

TMB (True Modular Building) involved making things infinitely repeatable and simple (KISS) to develop more sustainable, repeatable, and affordable residential housing. Envisioning the need for more adaptability, TMB created an easy-to-transport and assemble, sustainable, multifunctional, hybrid, plug-and-play, adaptable professional componentized residential building system. *"With this system, we are able to globally produce fast and at reduced cost, healthy residential buildings,"* shares Carel.

#### Beating Challenges

The biggest challenge while entering the modular construction industry is to always be cost-effective and adaptable to change. Although organizations operating within the industry face both external and internal challenges, to Carel, the internal ones are usually the biggest. Over the last 40 years, Kessel Rental, the sister company of TMB, has helped many famous brands with temporary kitchens and restaurants during construction and renovation projects.

It bought various modular halls and event structures, but they were expensive and did not always fit the ever-evolving local requirements. In 2016, the company decided to develop the new, patented NxtGen modular building system to meet local requirements.

#### An Insight into the Leadership Approach

As a business leader, Carel believes in being clear and compelling people to have constructive behavior, helping them see consistency, and letting them know they are treated equally. He has been in situations



where he had to fire people, close or relocate companies, and start from scratch. However, Carel rose above those situations, and his experience influenced his leadership style. People in his organization clearly understand their roles and responsibilities, and there is regular communication on progress.

### Driving Innovation: A Thought Leadership Approach

*“As a thought leader, you must think forward and lead by example. Walk your talk,”* says Carel. TMB is more than just his legacy; he thinks about the future of society as a whole. TMB fosters innovation and is always open to new ideas and technologies. The organization creates its own products, variations, or systems based on market demand. As it is not dependent on suppliers or major companies, it makes independent decisions and avoids policies that it disagrees with.

### Sustainability in Construction

Carel’s concept of sustainability in leadership involves optimizing value creation through building cost minimization and the use of quasi-vertical integration to stay in control of the supply and value chain. It’s important to have a long-term mindset, and developers should co-own buildings for at least 15 years and not go for short-term profit by selling them.

The creation of new hybrid demountable reusable building systems like **“True Modular Building”** makes a significant impact on all aspects of construction and building. Choices made during the design, construction, building, and maintenance must align with the longevity of a building and its building materials to ensure sustainability.

### The “Orange Kit” Framework

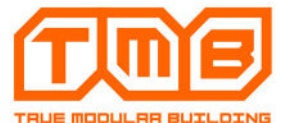
TMB **“Orange Kit”** platforms enable faster development and precise construction, eliminating waste, reducing costs, reducing the use of scarce raw materials, and creating fewer emissions. The hybrid building system is light, air-tight, damp-open, releasable, uses raw materials sparingly, and leverages their distinct attributes, like strength and adaptability. Orange Kit uses bio-based insulation and longevity components repeatedly without rework. TMB’s unique approach to building ensures that once an assembly is configured, it becomes a component.

### Words of Advice

Carel advises aspiring entrepreneurs to foster innovation, be open to new ideas and technologies. Persistence is key, but one must avoid investing in sinking ships; they are destined to sink. He also underscores that there is no one-size-fits-all advice, as each situation is unique.

### Envisioning the Future

In 2026, TMB will start building residential communities. It is presently setting up Joint Ventures and looking for representatives in various parts of the world. TMB projects generate cash flow (rental income) throughout their lifetime and have lower initial costs, and higher residual value. Investors will benefit from the increased value of the real estate and building components. TMB wants to start third-party private funds backed by real estate. It focuses on patient capital with large investment horizons from governments, pension funds, or family offices.



More knowledge  
(study), experience,  
and time to reflect  
changed or made me  
adjust my leadership  
style.

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