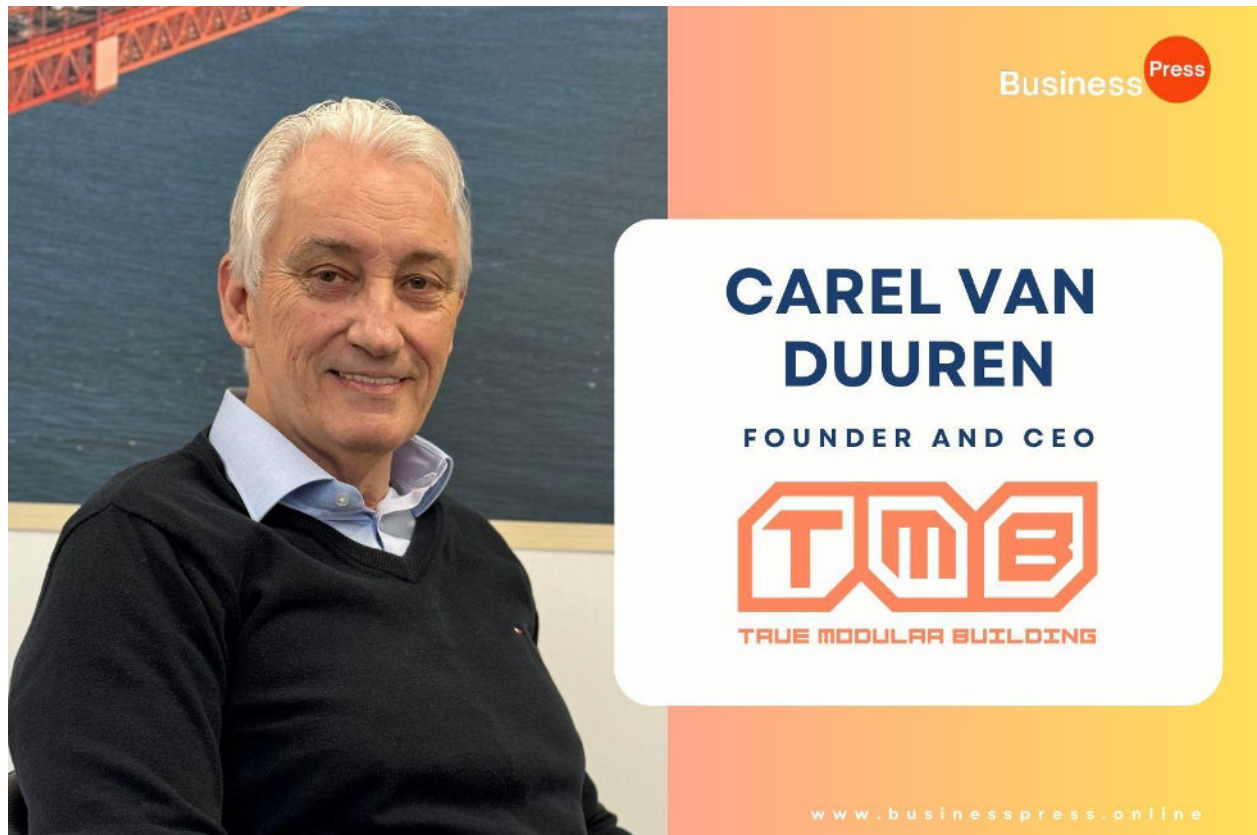


Delivering Sustainable Building Solutions With True Modular Building: Carel Van Duuren



We recently had the privilege of interviewing Carel Van Duuren, Founder and CEO of [True Modular Building Group](#). After being associated with several industries, Carel found his true calling when he joined the building industry. TMB is an asset-light quasi-vertical structured company and home of the “Orange Kit” green building system.

With goals to create affordable Build To Rent (BTR) housing and optimize customer user experience, TMB is driven by innovation in the building industry. True Modular is decomposing buildings into simple interchangeable modules, combining the benefits of standardization, which drives economies of scale, with the ability to create different configurations. In this insightful session, Carel shares his journey in the building industry, his visions for his company, and his ideal leadership approach.

The Beginning

We started the interview by asking Carel Van Duuren about his background, including his early life and educational journey.

Carel shared, “Choices you make and things that happen shape your professional journey. I have been fortunate to work and start companies in many different industries. I believe in continuous learning, staying curious, and acting when an opportunity arises. This curiosity made me find other, more interesting problems and possibilities which shifted my focus and pursued my career in many industries. I once read that you don’t find your passion, but your passion finds you. That’s what happened when I learned more about the global housing crisis and the way the building industry works. I have been investing and working for the last five years on what I now call - my legacy project.”

More About True Modular Building B.V.

Interested to learn more about Carel's business and its presence in the region, we posed the question, “Can you tell us more about your company and its role in your region?”

He explained, “TMB (True Modular Building B.V.) is a spin-off from NxtGen Smart Modular Building B.V. and part of a group of companies, including [Kessel Rental B.V.](#), [NxtGen Smart Modular Building B.V.](#), and [TMB](#).

TMB has an asset-light quasi-vertical business model and our commitment to sustainability is integrated throughout the value chain. We strongly believe that in the building industry, it’s imperative to have control over the value chain (AEC to final product) and supply chain to be able to make better choices for our planet. Our holistic integrated approach means we harness the expertise in infrastructure, design, development, investments, and management to deliver a project from conception to completion.

TMB has created a sustainable, hybrid, highly adaptive, plug-and-play, truly modular kit of parts (Orange Kit) building method to be able to globally produce healthy residential buildings. With Orange Kit, we can produce various building types. Per building type, all building components, add-ons or add-ins, electric and plumbing materials can be shipped in containers to any part of the world and assembled on-site.”

Looking For The Bigger Picture

To understand Carel's perspective on being an efficient and successful leader in his field, we inquired, “In your view, what qualities define a successful leader in your industry?”

“More knowledge, experience, and time to reflect changed, and made me adjust my leadership style. I have been reading and studying books since my childhood and still do. Be clear and

address people on unconstructive behavior. People see that they are treated equally, know what they can expect, and where boundaries or no-go areas are. It's a fact that you can't please everybody and always look at the big picture.

I have been in situations where I had to fire people, close or relocate companies, start from scratch and I have been hospitalized four times. Time and events over the years have influenced my leadership style.” Carel responded.

Adapting To The Tech-Driven Changes

Technological advancements have transformed every industry significantly, including Carel's industry. We asked Carel on this aspect, “How has your organization adapted to the ongoing digital revolution and technological advancements?”

“We have a small organization, and everybody has a clear understanding of his/her role and responsibility in the organization. There is regular digital communication on progress made and a reporting structure including all levels. We have not adapted our organization to the digital revolution, rather we have adapted our working procedures to change. Changes come and go. Software is a valuable tool for design, planning, budgeting (cost control), and reporting, but software will not solve the problems in the building industry. There is no reason to adapt an organization when you start with parametric design or BIM.

TMB fosters innovation and remains open to new ideas and technologies. The organization focuses on creating its products, based on market demand. By maintaining control over the value chain and manufacturing process, TMB is not at all dependent on major companies or suppliers, which in return allows the company to make independent decisions and avoid policies it may not agree with. People often think that a great idea is 90% of a product it's only 5%. The other 95% is needed for getting the product to the market.” He mentioned.

Message To Beginners

As a visionary leader in his field, Carel's guidance can help beginners start their journey with the right move. So, we asked, “What advice would you offer to someone beginning their career in your field?”

“Evaluate your proposition regularly and compare your overall package to what competitors are offering. Never give up and don't invest in sinking ships. They sink! There is no standard advice, each situation is different, and your proposition needs to adapt to the changing circumstances.” Carel added.

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