



Straight to the Right Desk

If there's one place where a lot of NUP building blocks will be used, it's at the Services Desk (*Dienstenloket*). A project which makes starting a business venture within Europe easier. Through fewer rules, reduced administrative burdens and reduced costs. And above all: in every Member State an online government office for entrepreneurs from within or outside the country. Is the Dutch *Antwoordvoorbedrijven.nl* (Answers for business) desk the ideal bridge between government and entrepreneur?

Yes, absolutely, thinks Jort Spanjer, owner of an architects' bureau. 'On *Antwoordvoorbedrijven.nl* there is information just for entrepreneurs, you are linked directly to the government where you need to be, and searching also works easily. You type in the postcode and search term and are directed straight to the right desk.'

Right at the Top

'My construction projects are spread over the entire country,' says Spanjer, 'and I do all the planning applications for my clients. I therefore have to deal with a great many different municipalities. The initial contact always goes via the site: I look to see if I can download the policy document on planning regulations for the location and external appearance of buildings, or if I can do the application online....sometimes that takes some searching. Each site has its own layout, uses different names and not everything can be done online. Moreover, many municipal sites contain so much information that you can't see the wood for the trees. The link to *Antwoordvoorbedrijven.nl* ought to be prominently displayed on every homepage, as far as I'm concerned. Right at the top. Many entrepreneurs want to know or check something quickly. It's handy then not to have to plough through the whole website.'

Don't Lag Behind

The municipality Aa en Hunze in the province of Drenthe is also pleased with *Antwoordvoorbedrijven.nl*. Pauline van der Sluijs: 'I think it's great that our products and services are linked to the cooperating catalogues behind *Antwoordvoorbedrijven.nl*.

Now you really see how *Antwoordvoorbedrijven.nl* works, it is no longer a complex and abstract concept. Through the compulsory link also grows the consciousness of the need for it. That you can't lag behind. Europe must after all become one market, and as municipality you must be prepared for rising internet use. Moreover, *Antwoordvoorbedrijven.nl* fits well into our online service provision policy. You do get an extra channel, however, the principle stays the same if you opt for business focussed working, like we do.'

Added Value

The EU Services Directive is a good thing, believes Theo Huizer of the Steenbergemunicipality. 'Our council naturally also wants to attract entrepreneurs from beyond the border. And that the entrepreneurs via *Antwoordvoorbedrijven.nl* can get to the right desk is an enormous added value. We also think *Antwoordvoorbedrijven.nl* is a good extension of our own online service provision. If a citizen on our site searches for a permit which the province, not the council, grants, you can immediately redirect him.'

Completely Won Over

From 2010 onwards *Antwoordvoorbedrijven.nl* will also include the Message Box. Via this secured environment, entrepreneurs can handle applications and procedures with the government. Terrific, thinks Spanjer. 'I make design drawings on Terschelling, email them to the builder and project developer, that's all possible. It is then relatively logical to conduct your business with the government online too. If they also have the signature issue sorted out – I sign many planning applications as the authorized representative – then I am completely won over.'