

START UP: Equine MERC

New entrepreneurs can always use some publicity. Just one phone call was therefore enough to generate enthusiasm for an interview with Luc and Daisy. Over the coming years they will organise the Limburg Foal Auction and the Dutch Sport Horse Sales for Stal Hendrix. The enterprising twenty-somethings set up the company Equine MERC in January 2014. MERC stands for Marketing, Events, Relations and Communication. They support entrepreneurs organising equestrian events. They also help companies in the equestrian sector in defining and carrying out a clear marketing strategy. In this way busy entrepreneurs have work taken off their hands and can concentrate on their core business. We agreed to meet in the ever-convivial 's-Hertogenbosch to hear more about their plans.

Who is Daisy van Nieuwkastele?

Daisy van Nieuwkastele (27) from Rotterdam completed her Bachelor degree Small Business & Retail Management in 2009. She has ridden since childhood. A job in the Sales Promotions Department of the KWPN was therefore the ideal combination of her hobby and her degree. For three years she organised, amongst other things, the KWPN Select Sale and government-subsidised trade missions to India, China and Russia. She was also responsible for the foreign marketing campaigns. The beginning of 2014 was time to take a new step. Together with Luc van Moorsel she started a new company: Equine MERC.



Who is Luc van Moorsel?

Luc van Moorsel (25) is from Erp in Brabant and lives in 's Hertogenbosch. He studied International Business and Languages. As part of his course he also worked for six months at the Dutch Embassy in China, carrying out market research for the KWPN. Luc wrote his graduate thesis by appointment of the Sligro Food Group in Veghel. In 2012 he started at Stal Hendrix where he was responsible for organising the Dutch Sport Horse Sales, the Limburg Foal Auction and for the marketing activities of the trading stables. His hobbies are training young horses and photography.

“It feels good that Stal Hendrix has confidence in us”

The front door swings open the smiling Luc opens it wide, we are guests at his home. “Welcome, we don’t have an office yet. The overheads have to stay low, right?!” Daisy waits for us at the top of the stairs. Not much later coffee is served with, how could it be otherwise, a “Bossche Bol”.

Both Daisy and Luc have ridden horses since childhood and have not let go of the sport since. Daisy started work for dressage rider Laurens van Lieren after her studies. She helped Laurens by taking charge of the marketing activities and the organisational tasks. Daisy says: “Because of my first job with Laurens I realised that working in the horse business does not just have to be about mucking out stables. What can be better than making your hobby your job?”

Luc also found that out two years ago when Paul Hendrix approached him to organise the Dutch Sport Horse Sales and the Limburg Foal Auction. He explains: Before then, I was not planning on working in the horse sector. But the idea of working for a renown trading stable such as Stal Hendrix really appealed to me. You can learn so much from their ideas and way of doing business.”

Daisy tells what motivated them to set up Equine MERC, while Luc pushes the knob on the Senseo-machine again: “When I worked for the KWPN I noticed that equestrian entrepreneurs were often looking for ways of presenting their business optimally. They often have no understanding whatsoever of marketing and communication.” Luc continues: “Our unique selling point is that we have experience in both. Through our studies and years of experience with horses we are the link between the equestrian entrepreneur and the marketing tools.” Daisy gives an example: “You can have an excellently-running business but to portray that clearly in a promotional video, that is a different matter.”

Their first customer is Stal Hendrix with the Limburg Foal Auction and Dutch Sport Horse Sales. Luc: “This is a very good example of our added value. Paul and Emile need to concentrate on the horses and the customers. They shouldn’t be busy compiling the catalogues and checking whether the odd-jobbers are on time.” Daisy says: “It gives us a good feeling that Paul and Emile have confidence in us. Projects such as these are great opportunities for us to show our worth.”