

AN INTERVIEW WITH *Scriptly*: STARTING A COMPANY

Some students might be familiar with the—at times anxiety inducing— thoughts in the back of your head, such as ‘what will I do after graduating’ or ‘is the job-market sufficiently stocked with jobs which will offer me further opportunities’. Going from being a full-time student to setting up your very own company...is a big change.

Today I grabbed my chance to sit down with Inge, Richard, and Alyssa, who are all following a Master’s degree here at Leiden University, to find out how they have succeeded in setting up a successful business.

During the interview the atmosphere was very pleasant and friendly; I believe it is safe to state that running a company together has not negatively changed their long lasting friendship in any way.

INTERVIEW

FIRST, PLEASE TELL US: HOW DID IT ALL BEGIN?

“We (Richard & Inge) were already playing with the idea of starting a business together for some time during our last year of the bachelor. Actually it all started after our translation minor. This gave us the idea of setting up a translation business, which then changed to more of an editing business. Once Alyssa learned about our idea she let us know she was very interested as well, and from then on it all became more concrete. Also, all three of us had been previously asked by several students to check their essays, papers and dissertations. After a while, we figured, if there is a market for this, why not make some money doing it. Students often have to, or want to write in English but have never had any feedback or taken any courses in doing so.”

HOW DID YOU COME UP WITH THE NAME FOR THE COMPANY?

This question causes some laughter as they all exchange looks. Alyssa takes the floor and says : “Good question! A lot of brainstorming. A lot of jokes. It had to be something

with text, because of what we do, we also wanted something which sounds hip. *Scriptly* came up as it has the word script in there, yet it also sounds like ‘scriptie’ (ed. Dutch for thesis). This is the pun...”

IS IT HECTIC TO HAVE YOUR OWN BUSINESS NEXT TO YOUR STUDIES?

Unanimously: “Sometimes, although being with the three of us we manage to help each other out and efficiently divide tasks. If one person is too busy, the others will jump in. It is manageable, though there is much that needs to be done besides the assignments; the website, paperwork, emails etc. There is quite some administration.”

SINCE WHEN HAVE YOU HAD THIS COMPANY UP AND RUNNING?

“We started *Scriptly* last year (beginning of September), but had been talking about it before that. We did start 6 months in advance with collecting all the necessary information, making sure we had everything in order before The Grand Opening of *Scriptly*. We really wanted to start at the beginning of the new school year.

Recently we have started developing a second company, called *Textr*, aimed at non-students. *Textr* provides translation services as well as editing services, Dutch to English and English to Dutch.”

{ Let's *face* it:
students are generally
skinned }

WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM OTHER, SIMILAR TYPES OF EDITING COMPANIES?

“Firstly, we are much cheaper, and let's face it, students are usually skinned. Secondly, we have a team of three well-trained students who all have a very high level of English. Thirdly, we are students ourselves, we know what teachers want to read and we know what good essays look like. We have a great affinity with the academic world. Lastly, we offer a free second check

ensuring the quality of each and every edited text.”

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO STUDENTS WHO ARE ALSO THINKING ABOUT SETTING UP THEIR OWN COMPANY?

“If you have a great idea, just go for it! As for practical stuff, read! There is so much information on the internet about starting your own company. Also look into taxes, freelance regulations and your pension (which you will have to arrange yourself). Luckily, Richard and his brother collaborated on making the website, and besides this, we mainly taught ourselves how to do the administration and other things. Ask people in your environment to teach you/help you out; it's always a good idea to collect as much information as you can before getting started.” ■

Miriam Dieperink



The Scriptly-team

Scriptly is all about editing texts for students. We minutely read your text several times, each time focusing on a specific aspect of the text. This is a very precise process which ensures that any possible errors are corrected. Besides, in the margins, we always explain why a certain correction or change has been made. We aim to help students in their future writing by providing tips on grammar.

For *Textr* we translate a wide range of text types of any size, for instance: cover letters, resumes, PhD proposals, essays, theses, advertising material, websites, applications, and games.

If you are interested in our services, please
take a look at our website:

WWW.SCRIPTLY.NL