**When the Dutch Cybersecurity Community Speaks, their International Peers Listen**

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Cybersecurity is a dynamic race, pushing boundaries and constantly outsmarting malicious hackers. Building digital forts that will withstand advanced attacks for multiple years, from the world’s most skilled hackers. Sectra, a Swedish cybersecurity company with an establishment in The Hague, delivers communication solutions up to the highest security classifications to the Dutch government, the EU and NATO. Jeroen de Muijnck, Managing Director at Sectra Communications Netherlands, is a prominent member of the Dutch cybersecurity community.

Jeroen started his career in communication technology at KPN research and Nokia Home Communications before switching to Sectra in Linköping, Sweden in 2004. As a spin-off from Linköping university, Sectra was founded in 1978 with the task to create a security solution for banks. About a decade later, Sectra received its first orders for crypto modules from the Swedish Defense Forces. Sectra Communications soon became market leader in mobile crypto equipment and nowadays employs 100 professionals worldwide.

From his position in Sweden, Jeroen saw interest for Sectra’s equipment from the Dutch government for officials who were dealing with and communicating about classified information at the highest level. Sectra’s office in The Hague offers the right conditions, at the centre of the cybersecurity community and at walking distance from the Ministries where his main clients hold office. “Our clients really value our vicinity. They are always very busy and the possibility to just walk over for meetings makes life easy for them.” Says Jeroen. Being located in The Hague, which is also home to the Dutch (cyber)security cluster HSD brings more benefits, as Jeroen elaborates: “Collaboration is essential for companies in the cybersecurity space. Not just because of the complexity of the matter and how fast our field develops, but also because of the high stakes involved. To safeguard the required quality of our products and services, everyone in the value chain must focus on doing what they do best.”

The Dutch cybersecurity community is tight-knit, says Jeroen. “We know who supplies what to whom, and what their capabilities and specific expertise is. This makes it easy to reach out when we need something for a new product we are working on.” HSD is the central location where the cybersecurity community comes together, from governmental bodies to research institutes and companies. Being located so close this cluster organisation gives direct access to that network. Collaboration requires trust, which poses a significant threshold for many companies. In the Dutch cybersecurity community, this trust is built, among others, upon personal relationships at the executive level. “Of course, there may be IP-sensitive information involved but my colleagues know what information they can’t share in collaboration and vice versa. We also know and respect each others business positions so we know what not to inquire about. We are co-dependent within this industry and violating each other’s interests will damage ourselves sooner or later.” Jeroen continues.

“But I would argue that the most important driver of the vivid collaboration in the community is our shared sense of purpose. Far beyond our business objectives, our concern is the sovereignty and safety of our nations!” What also adds to the collaborative dynamics within the community is the high reputation of the Dutch cybersecurity industry. The Dutch intelligence agencies have demonstrated their cutting-edge capabilities at various occasions, and often play a crucial role in fighting cyber crime on a global scale. “Besides the Dutch cybersecurity associations, I also participate in international associations. It is noticeable that our opinion – the Dutch opinion, matters. It has a highly motivating effect to be part of a world-leading community, and knowing how high the level of expertise of the surrounding people is. Imagine what our combined knowledge can accomplish!”