

5 Questions with... Menno van Dijk from Studio Delta

28 August 2018 09:30 Business

Written by
Laura Nicholls



The superyacht industry may be small to some, but it is filled with a range of experts and professionals from around the world. In this series, we shine a light on some of the specialists working within the different segments of the industry to learn more about what they do for the sector. In nearly 20 years, Studio Delta have developed an impressive portfolio which features technical designs with a scope of consultancy projects for yachts ranging 30-100-metres and above.

Conducting business from their studio in the Netherlands, Director of Studio Delta and Naval Architect, Menno van Dijk, takes the time to speak with us about the past, present and future of their internationally recognised services.



You are the managing director at Studio Delta. How did you get into the yachting industry and how did you end up managing the current team of naval architects and engineers at Studio Delta?

As a student, I had no idea which part of the industry I wanted to end up in. I just wanted to become a Naval Architect. After my studies, my first jobs were mainly in commercial shipbuilding - but in one job, in particular, I was able to work in the office and also engineer superyachts for a yard in the north of Holland.

I gained some useful experience in the yachting industry and wanted to operate independently. In 1999, I started with my first client. From then on, the company grew and 20 years later here we are, managing a team of naval architects working in the yachting industry. Building this company over the last 20 years has placed us in a position of international recognition for technical craftsmanship and reliability - and is exactly where we want to remain in the future.



How has Studio Delta evolved over the years since it was founded?

20 years ago we just had gone from paper drawings to digital. 3D stations were nothing less than sizeable bridge control units. Fortunately, the majority of supporting software is available for optimisation and the step to 3D is much leaner, but software and hardware often remain a costly bottleneck.

All technical developments aside, water is still water, waves are still waves... Which people sometimes forget, especially when processes become much more important than common sense and practical knowledge. We see this in our behind the scenes contribution to the 60-metre and above superyacht market, as well as in the solid portfolio of highly technical projects in tenders and fast yachts. We try to remain focused on those core assets and let processes be an aid and not a means to an end. But surely we have been developing our core assets together with production efficiency implementing an integral design philosophy with the aid of 3D and other CAD tools.

Studio Delta also provides consultancy services for new builds and refit projects. What are some of the challenges Studio Delta has faced in the past concerning superyacht refits and how did you overcome them?

Refits are fantastic! With older vessels, the challenges lie when there is a lack of information or contradicting information in ships with paper archives. In the old days, the foreman had his own way to go about the build of a yacht, which for us means that you should not trust what you have not measured yourself! But it also allows for some extra creativity. Usually, these older ships are pretty sturdy and over-designed, so they allow for nice reengineering. However, some of these ships were more slender, and so modern stability requirements may cross-out refit plans.

In modern yachts, there are much fewer challenges, but the refit demands are often much higher since there are so many options. Solutions are much more technical and analyzed based, but still very creative.



Studio Delta has supported Blue Marine Foundation since 2015 and is one of the first naval architecture companies to acknowledge their responsibility towards ocean preservation. How important is sustainability and environmental protection to Studio Delta?

We are very proud to be one of the forerunners in supporting Blue. Their work is so important and they work very hard to turn fragile parts of the oceans into sanctuaries. It is also because of their efforts that many owners are becoming more and more aware of the importance of a healthy ocean. Studio Delta lives off the fact that being on the water has such an appeal to people and is vital to our planet in so many ways - because of this we investigated the value of Blue and it did not take long for us to decide to support them.

What does Studio Delta have planned for the future?

We recently made a big step moving into our new offices overlooking the North Sea. From there we will continue to develop our core values, but we have no interest in becoming a large company. We are the flexible business partner and our knowledge and experience are combined with customer care.