

# ‘WE TRANSFORMED THE SITUATION INTO SOMETHING POSITIVE’

Interview with Jeanet van der Vlugt of Wens Business Events



It was set to be the busiest weekend of the year for Wens Business Events, which had about 25 groups – totalling hundreds of travellers – scheduled to leave for ski destinations when the government announcement came on 20 March that all air traffic was grounded. Complete upheaval, is how Jeanet van der Vlugt, director of Wens Business Events describes it. Hello Zuidas caught up with Van der Vlugt to talk about these turbulent times and how her company is bouncing back to organize trips again.

## KEEPING A LEVEL HEAD

Even though the closures of Schiphol Airport and many borders were like scenes from a nightmare for Van der Vlugt, she kept a level head and stayed optimistic. ‘Communication

with customers and clients was and is always number one for us. Sometimes that costs more, but pulling through this crisis together with them was the most important thing for us’, Van der Vlugt explains. ‘In the meantime,

we constantly stayed in touch with our network both online and by phone. People genuinely wanted to know how we were doing and expressed their concern. That also got me thinking, because while I know how



JEANET VAN DER VLUGT

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we’re getting on behind the scenes and that we can take a few knocks, our customers don’t know that. That same afternoon I enrolled us for a guarantee fund and we were registered within two weeks. That felt good, because we transformed the situation into something positive’.

## COVID-19 GUARANTEE

Van der Vlugt was determined to maintain that same positive outlook among her team of employees. As soon as measures were eased, the team started working more part-time shifts in the office, says Van der Vlugt. ‘Energizing each other, brainstorming and rolling up our sleeves to make organizing travel possible again were crucial for us.’ And

that paid off, Van der Vlugt enthusiastically confirms. ‘Now everyone’s back at work again and we’re getting loads of requests. Businesses need us again!’ This is also where Wens Business Events’ clear guarantees are a real asset. ‘The fear plaguing everyone right now is: What if I get sick? We decided to deal with that straight away by creating a COVID-19 guarantee. If you fall ill from Corona even one day before a trip, we give you a full refund.’

## NEVER WASTE A GOOD CRISIS

It’s obvious Van der Vlugt is a go-getter with a real hands-on mentality. Even in the midst of a crisis, the relocation of Wens Business Events to an iconic villa on the outskirts of

Baarn went ahead as planned. ‘I did quite a bit of heavy lifting on my own’, Van der Vlugt laughs. ‘But then, my motto was “never waste a good crisis”. It has brought new insights that have truly helped us to stand out. Thanks to all our hard work, we’ve been able to step up our game. In the end, no ad campaign can match that.’

## WENS BUSINESS EVENTS

Stationsweg 24  
3743 EN Baarn  
www.wensbusinessevents.nl  
info@wensbusinessevents.nl  
+ 31 (0)35 30 35 555