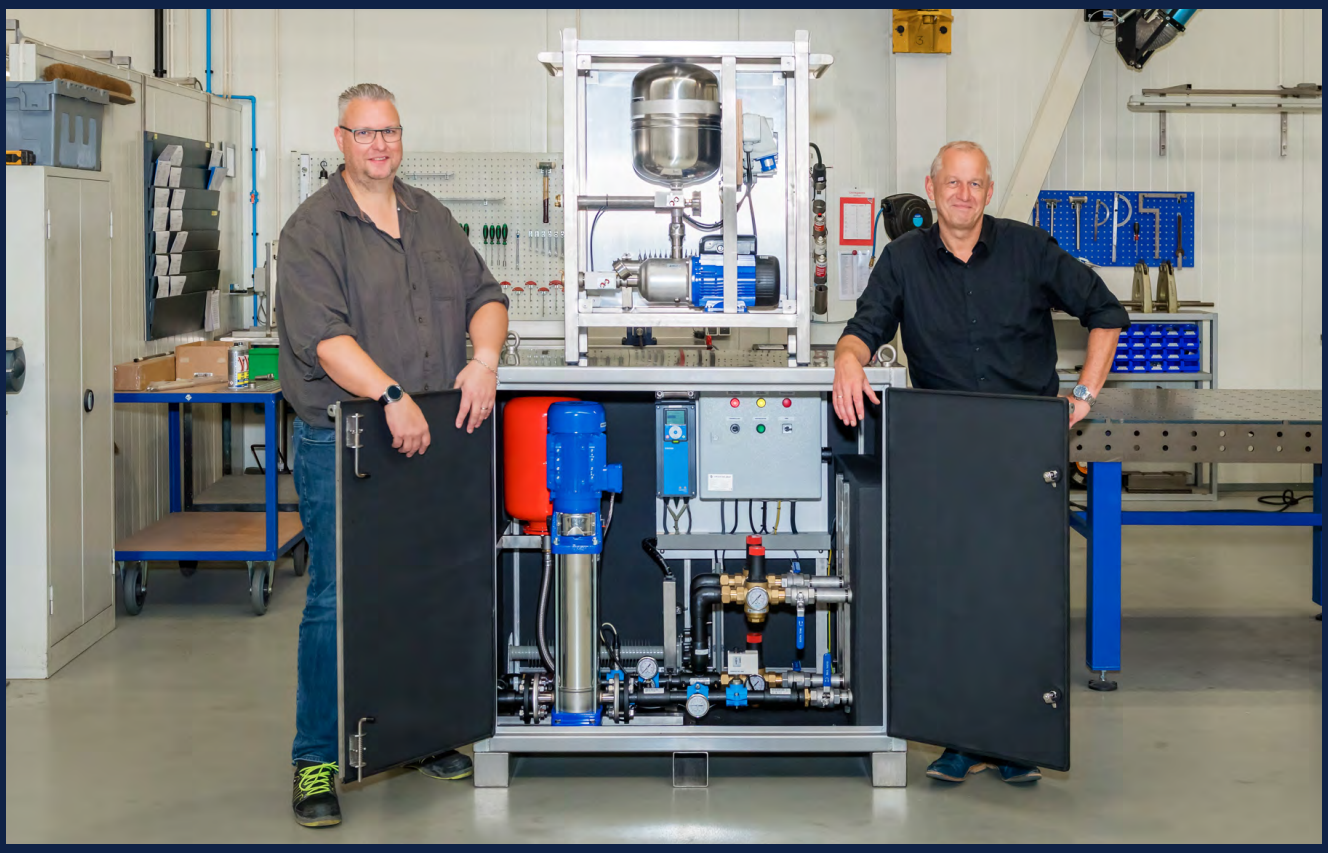
CASE STORY

VAN DER ENDE GROUP'S OWN HYDROPHORE UNIT IS NEW 'HIGH POINT' IN ITS PRODUCT RANGE

When a high-rise building is under construction anywhere in the Netherlands, there's a good chance that Van der Ende Group is responsible for pumping the water up to where it's needed. Within a short space of time, the Maasdijk company's own hydrophore system has made impressive inroads into the building sector. It says a lot that RECO, the largest building equipment hire service in Benelux, now supplies only these Van der Ende Group systems. And this really isn't surprising: before introducing the products, Van der Ende Group made a detailed survey of what the market wanted.

André van den Berg (left) and **Michel Koeleman** (right), Van der Ende Group



The success story of the water booster unit started ten years ago, at a very difficult time: the building industry had fallen into a deep pit. The crisis went on, year after year. Looking back, we can see that something good came out of this misfortune. Van der Ende Group had the opportunity to really perfect the final product. It was Account Manager Michel Koeleman who first introduced the idea. 'I'd worked for a building materials supplier, and noticed the hydrophore unit produced by another manufacturer. It crossed my mind that we could make a better version, and I suggested this idea to Van der Ende Group.'

DEVELOPING THE PROTOTYPE

And in fact there was much room for improvement, concluded Michel Koeleman and engineer André van den Berg, after conducting a survey of the target group. André: 'The unit needed to be compact and energy efficient, stackable and digger-proof, with very few projecting parts that could be knocked off as you drove past.' Working with the construction department, a prototype was developed: a robust stainless steel cabinet, standard pallet size, containing a pump system with outlets at three levels. Everything that needs to be screwed onto the outside must be recessed into the cabinet, so that nothing sticks out.

UNIQUE FREQUENCY CONTROLLER

The pumped water drains away cleanly after use, without leaving a trail of splashes. Built-in lighting makes it easy to use the unit in the winter months, and the unit can even be heated in the winter: the finned heater keeps the unit ice-free and dry during periods of frost. And to prevent any frozen pipes, a connection for a trace heating system has also been included. Another striking feature is the integrated frequency controller, an innovation that André van den Berg says had 'rarely been used': 'The unit can operate faster or slower as soon as you need more water or less water. And this saves on energy too.'

Hydrophore unit 1-phase

SAFETY

Van der Ende Group also gave attention to safety and reliability. André: 'There's a safety switch integrated in the unit to make sure that none of the other components are damaged if something goes wrong. The unit sends an automatic signal if anything malfunctions.' The pump can raise water to a height of 110 meters, which is more than enough for most high-rise buildings. To meet customer wishes for a competitively priced alternative for lower buildings, a version with a single phase motor was developed in consultation with RECO. This reaches a height of 60 meters.

Van der Ende Group

NO MONEY FOR INVESTMENT

The smart features brought together in Van der Ende Group's water booster unit got an enthusiastic thumbs-up from the contractors in the target group. Michel Koeleman: 'We introduced the new product and everyone gave it a positive reception. But nobody invested in it: they had no money during the crisis. Until six or seven years ago. We then started seeing demand from contractors for durable products with a longer service life than the standard products.'

RELIABILITY HAD BEEN 'AN ISSUE'

This demand is also recognized by Michael van Delft, Logistics Manager at RECO. The company in Koudekerk aan den Rijn (NL) hires out building equipment for more than 300 construction sites each year. 'The reliability of the old booster systems had always been an issue. For every single project, we were constantly having to adjust and adapt a unit. It took up a tremendous amount of time. Then we started looking for a different solution. One that's more compact and that comes with a service package and a guarantee, for anything we can't resolve ourselves.'

Michael van Delft, RECO

LARGEST HIRE SERVICE IN BENELUX

That solution was called Van der Ende Group. RECO now hires out many of the hydrophore units to construction companies that don't have one or more units in their own equipment department. RECO's hire list includes both the 110-meter and 60-meter units. At the time of writing, more than 95% of their units are out on hire.

The digger-proof construction means that the systems are returned undamaged. 'They're often dirty, but the cabinet provides a good, solid enclosure, so there's little or no damage on the inside,' says Michael van Delft. 'And if a fault occurs on-site that we can't deal with ourselves, then we call in Van der Ende Group. They have a 24/7 arrangement. It works extremely well.'

TRAINING OF USERS

The fact that Van der Ende Group 'trains' the users in operating the water booster units also helps to promote skilful use. The construction company staff who will be responsible for operating them are invited to attend a training session at the Van der Ende Group site in Maasdijk. André van den Berg: 'We demonstrate the kinds of faults they might encounter during use, and what you should do to rectify them. I simulate those faults here and give the right instructions. I can also view some customers' systems remotely. Then they only need to plug their laptop into the unit and connect it with our portal. And I can do more than just view, I can also configure the unit remotely. Within 5 minutes, the hydrophore unit is ready to use.'

> The unit needed to be compact and energy efficient, stackable and digger-proof, with very few projecting parts that could be knocked off as you drove past.
>
> **André van den Berg**

BUILDINGS HIGHER THAN 110 METERS

Account Manager Michel Koeleman has not failed to notice the current trend for higher and higher buildings. The construction of the Zalmhaven tower (58 storeys) in Rotterdam established a new Dutch record for a high-rise building last October: 215 meters. So if a client wants to go higher than 110 meters, there's also a solution for this. 'The standard model has a limit of 110 meters, which allows us to handle 90 percent of the high-rise buildings in the Netherlands. But in principle we can connect the units together without limit.

WE WILL BE GLAD TO HELP YOU

Would you like to know more about our hydrophore units?

Call with our specialists via +31 174 51 50 50.
Visit our website www.vanderendegroup.com.

Van der Ende Group