

To Jo, Marleen, and their family

Preface

“Inspiration and creativity, leading to collaboration and innovation in logistics”

This book is a liber amicorum to Jo van Nunen. It is a book about scientific innovations, with contributions of many friends, colleagues, and professionals in logistics, operations research, and information management in the Netherlands and abroad. It is a book published by Dinalog, the Dutch Institute for Advanced Logistics and the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University Rotterdam. This book is dedicated to an extraordinary person who has made an enormous contribution to science and innovation in logistics and operations research, on a national and international level.

Born in Venlo, Jo van Nunen left Limburg at 18, studied mathematics and continued with a PhD in Operations Research at Eindhoven University of Technology. His field of interest was quite broad and in the early days he was heavily involved in the development of Mathematics and Information Technology.

As a newly appointed professor in Rotterdam, he was the first one introducing computers in the educational programs of the Rotterdam School of Management. When Internet developed, he started projects in the field of e-learning, tele-conferencing, and new media.

One of the great successes of him and his group was the development of the EDI management simulation game “The Port of Rotterdam” on the introduction of Telematics and EDI in Industry. The game showed the enormous and profitable impact of Telematics and EDI in changing logistics chains and networks. Not only students and researchers from the Rotterdam School of Management and many other universities worked with this game, but also thousands of professionals in industry, in logistics as well as in many other sectors worldwide, learned from playing this game.

This project is a typical example of the way Jo was able to combine top research with innovative educational programs and last but not least transferring knowledge to society and industry. It is an example of what nowadays is called valorization of knowledge, bringing research results to economic and societal value. As true entrepreneurs Jo and his group reinvested the fruits of their labor (a serious amount of money) in further research and education. It gave him the possibility to grab new opportunities without always being dependent on institutional funding and budgets.

From the start, during his study and through his further professional career, Jo invested in people, students, PhD’s, researchers and logistic professionals. They all became dear to him, almost family. This way Jo has built a network of people and professionals all involved in projects, in teaching, in research and in innovative projects, in the wide logistics sector. The formula was simple: you got in touch with Jo, you worked with him for a while, became true friends, spread out to follow your own career, but you always stayed in touch and connected. This phenomenal international network of professionals was, or better is based on his warmth, humor, creativity and his ability to share successes. People loved to work with Jo and were always willing to contribute to his ambitions, his initiatives and his projects, for the benefit of innovation in logistics.

This way Jo has had an enormous impact on logistics and supply chains, national and international. As a lecturer, as a speaker, as an advisor, as a researcher, but most of all as an entertainer, he stimulated and inspired others to innovate. He was an extraordinary person, always full of life and new ideas with an enormous drive and determination.

He was a source of inspiration for governments and private industries that he cooperated with. As a member of the “Van Laarhoven Advisory Committee”, appointed by Karla Peijs, former Minister of Transport, he was one of the founders of the Dutch Institute for Advanced Logistics. He was one of the architects of the National Innovation Program in Logistics and Supply Chains.

When the institute was launched late 2009, he looked forward to contribute for many more years. For Jo, it was the starting point of the next step in his career, but unfortunately he passed away.

We truly miss Jo. His drive, his enthusiasm, his humor and his warm personality will always be in our minds and many, many people will continue the work that he has initiated.

This book is an “in memoriam” to Jo, to whom we, colleagues, friends, professionals in research, education and innovation in the wide logistics sector, owe a lot of gratitude.

Wim Bens
Managing Director Dinalog

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