

FOUNDERS' LETTER

THE WORLD DOESN'T NEED MORE STUFF, IT NEEDS SMARTER SOLUTIONS.

Amsterdam, May 18, 2015

We see personal and professional lifestyles changing, boundaries between work and leisure fading, and borders blurring as people become more mobile than ever. The internet and other progressive technologies and infrastructures are enabling an ever growing number of people from a variety of backgrounds, nationalities and disciplines to become part of a growing collaborative travelling business movement. They roam the globe and enjoying everything it has to offer.

These traveling professionals work for companies or outside the traditional employment relationship. They travel light and are not bound by duty since they are passionate about what they do. Yet no one has designed a home specifically around the wishes of these global nomads - while an obvious and rising demand exists.

Although this tribe maintains strong online connections, they don't always find real and physical ones. Traditional hotels or serviced apartments can be slightly boring, potentially lonely and are often no more than a shelter offering the basics. Hence, we saw a huge opportunity in going beyond and re-inventing the (apartment) hotel.

In fact, the nature of a hotel has always been a place where people from different nationalities, backgrounds and fields of expertise stay together. However they rarely met and interacted. We started thinking about the possibilities in creating a place where people and ideas came together. We saw the potential of stretching the definition of a hotel into a place where people can stay for longer periods and truly engage with the world and people around them.

'Instead of more stuff, the world needs smarter solutions...' This statement has always been our larger vision as we took the many small steps to bring our dream to life. We applied it to the architecture, design and technology - three things we all love - while always using the future users as our starting point. Zoku means family, tribe or clan in Japanese and as such we joined forces with our target group from the very beginning. They helped us craft a business/living environment that feels like home while also offering both professional services and ways for them to lead and active and local social life. By skipping the frills and using clever multifunctional space usage, we also managed to make it affordable.

After six years of hard work, today we're officially launching Zoku. It's the result of an exciting collision of countless people and ideas. A large collaborative crowd gathered around Zoku over the last years which included people who believed in Zoku, actively supported us, cheered us on, gave us confidence or simply offered a sympathetic ear. They evaluated our prototypes by test-bouncing the beds. They wrote testimonials. They shared an idea - big or small, but always important. They gave insights. They connected us with someone from their valuable network. We proudly stitched together all these priceless contributions, and in the process came to call these helpers: Zoku's Fathers and Mothers. We are very grateful for this merry family of amazing people that helped us kickstart our dream in such a fantastic way. We believe that they deserve to be mentioned on our new website and you will find their names below.

Zoku isn't a traditional hotel and we don't intend to become one. Zoku will remain a work-in-progress that with the help of our amazing team and many others will continue to become better and better - in making your life easier, more fun and more fulfilling while living and working abroad.

Welcome to Zoku!

Marc & Hans

