

How are sustainable business opportunities formed?

A qualitative analysis of sustainable opportunity identification in Dutch SME's

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Abstract

Sustainable companies are the core drivers of sustainable development, their focus lies on increasing their positive impact on nature and society, rather than minimizing the negative impact. This qualitative research seeks to give an insight into how sustainable entrepreneurs identify sustainable entrepreneurial opportunities, and what characterizes them. Opportunity identification literature argues opportunities can be discovered or created by entrepreneurs. Opportunities which are discovered exist independent of the entrepreneur, while opportunities which are created don't exist independent of the entrepreneur and are formed by the entrepreneur's actions. Ex post it's always possible to interpret an opportunity as either having been discovered or created. To be able to tell whether an opportunity has been discovered or created one has to look at the entrepreneurial actions an entrepreneurs took while identifying the opportunity. The entrepreneurial actions an entrepreneur takes, indicate the assumption he makes about the context he's in. A discovery context is risky, while a creation context is uncertain. Thirteen Dutch sustainable entrepreneurs have been interviewed to assess how they identified their sustainable opportunities. The interviewed sustainable entrepreneurs show clear signs of perpetual reasoning while designing their business, this is different from how conventional entrepreneurs manage a business. Although all sustainable entrepreneurs show signs of perpetual reasoning, they don't identify opportunities in one single manner. Some sustainable entrepreneurs discover opportunities while others create opportunities, however for many of these entrepreneurial opportunities it's not possible to categorize them as either having been discovered or created.

Foreword

Stepping into the world of sustainable entrepreneurship has made me aware of the need to organize businesses differently and take more care of our planet and its people. Learning more about sustainable businesses, the ideals of the entrepreneurs and above all seeing how it can be done differently has been very inspirational to me. I would like to thank all the entrepreneurs who wanted to help me with my research, inspired me, gave me tasty soup, coffee and cookies, and above all showed me an alternative route into the future. I would also like to thank my supervisor Dr. M.A.H. Groen for leading me through the thesis process and providing me with helpful feedback and advice.

As can be seen in the empirical section of this thesis, entrepreneurs can be men and women. However to guarantee the readability of the theoretical parts of thesis I have referred to entrepreneurs only as men.

Table of Contents

Abstract	I
Foreword	II
Table of Contents	III
List of Tables.....	IV
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Problem Indication	1
1.2 Problem statement	2
1.3 Research questions	2
1.4 Methods.....	2
1.5 Structure	2
2. Theoretical Framework	3
2.1 Sustainable Entrepreneurship.....	3
2.2 Entrepreneurial opportunities	6
2.3 Conclusion.....	14
3. Research Methods	15
3.1 Research Design.....	15
3.2 Data Collection and Analysis	15
3.3 Validity and reliability.....	18
4. Results	20
4.1 Sustainable Entrepreneurship.....	20
4.2 Distinguishing the discovery or creation of an opportunity	23
4.3 Opportunity identification	28
5. Conclusion & Discussion	30
5.1 Conclusion.....	30
5.2 Discussion	31
5.3 Limitations & Future Research	33
6. References	35
7. Appendices	38
7.1 Sustainable business model archetypes.....	38
7.2 Interview.....	39
7.3 Company profiles	41
7.4 Data Displays	54

List of Tables

Table 1: Sustainability innovations (Carillo-Hermosilla, del Rio, & Konnola, 2010).....	4
Table 2: Comparison of perpetual and exploitative reasoning (Parrish, 2010)	6
Table 3: Effectuation and Causation principles (Sarasvathy, 2001)	10
Table 4: Entrepreneurial action in discovery and creation contexts (Alvarez & Barney, 2007).....	11
Table 5: Overview respondents	16
Table 6: Overview platforms for sustainable entrepreneurs.....	16
Table 7: Selection procedure	17
Table 8: Overview results entrepreneurial action.....	24
Table 9: Sustainable business model archetypes (Bocken, Short & Evans, 2014).....	38

1. Introduction

1.1 Problem Indication

Entrepreneurs can exploit profitable business opportunities while doing well for the environment and society, thereby creating a win-win sustainable businesses (Cohen & Winn, 2007). Sustainable entrepreneurship is a form of entrepreneurship which takes place in new and established companies and focuses on delivering profitable products and services aimed at a mass market while minimizing negative consequences or maximizing positive impact on the environment and society (Cohen & Winn, 2007; Hockerts & Wustenhagen, 2010; Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011). A limited amount of research in the field of sustainable entrepreneurship has been done and a lot of questions remain unanswered (Hall, Daneke, & Lenox, 2010; Pacheco, Dean, & Payne, 2010). Venkataraman (1997) already pointed out the importance of understanding entrepreneurial opportunities and its sources. Also in the emerging field of sustainable entrepreneurship it's important to understand where these sustainable business opportunities come from (Hall et al., 2010).

Entrepreneurship research describes the link between the presence of business opportunities and the presence of entrepreneurial individuals. The focus of research has mainly been on the entrepreneurial individuals, although there is an increasing interest in entrepreneurial opportunities (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Perspectives on the identification of entrepreneurial opportunities can be divided into discovery and creation views (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). The discovery view argues that within existent economic systems there are opportunities, which exist independent of entrepreneurs. These opportunities are formed by exogenous forces over which the entrepreneur has no influence (Alvarez & Barney, 2007; Sarason, Dean, & Dillard, 2006; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). The alert entrepreneur searches for opportunities and will be able to discover them (Pacheco et al., 2010; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). The creation view argues that opportunities do not exist independent of entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial opportunities don't necessarily have to evolve out of existing markets or industries (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). Entrepreneurs create opportunities endogenously, by their own actions and reactions with economic structures (Alvarez & Barney, 2007; Pacheco et al., 2010). Ex post it will always be possible to describe opportunity formation as either a discovery or creation process (Alvarez & Barney, 2007; Sarasvathy, Velamuri, & Venkataraman, 2003). To identify how an opportunity came into existence, one has to look at entrepreneurial actions that were taken in the formation of the opportunity (Alvarez & Barney, 2007).

Extant academic literature on sustainable entrepreneurship is more prescriptive than descriptive and answering important questions within the field requires more empirical research (Hall et al., 2010). In the field of entrepreneurship, scholars have sought to answer questions regarding the sources and identification of entrepreneurial opportunities, however within the field of sustainable

entrepreneurship the research on sustainable opportunities remains underdeveloped. This master thesis will add to the field of sustainable entrepreneurship through empirical research and will help further develop the knowledge about the identification of sustainable business opportunities.

1.2 Problem statement

The central question in this master thesis is

How do sustainable entrepreneurs identify business opportunities?

1.3 Research questions

The central question is divided into three research questions.

1. *What are sustainable entrepreneurs?*
2. *Which views of entrepreneurial opportunity identification are described by the literature?*
3. *How do Dutch sustainable entrepreneurs describe the way they identify business opportunities?*

1.4 Methods

The research conducted to answer the research questions consists of a literature review for the first two questions and a cross-sectional qualitative research for the last research question. Through non-probability sampling, Dutch sustainable entrepreneurs are selected, online and offline business networks for sustainable businesses are used to find them. Semi-structured interviews with topics based on the theoretical framework, are used to conduct the research. All interviews are recorded, transcribed and coded, data displays and company profiles can be found in the appendices in chapter 7.

1.5 Structure

This introduction is followed by a literature review in which the theoretical framework is presented. In chapter three the research methods are described, this includes the type of research and respondents. Chapter four presents the results of the research, and chapter five presents a conclusion, discussion, research limitations and future directions for research.

2. Theoretical Framework

The way society is using natural resources and producing energy is becoming more and more of a concern. The awareness that a fundamental change is needed to halt major environmental issues such as global climate change and ecosystem degradation, is growing (Hall et al., 2010). Entrepreneurship is being named as a way to initiate a change towards more sustainable products and processes (Braungart & McDonough, 1998; Hart & Milstein, 1999; Senge, 2007). However the huge environmental and societal challenges that are being faced around the world, require more than just incremental solutions (Russo, 2003). Research on the role of entrepreneurship in sustainable development and addressing sustainability challenges is still scarce (Hall et al., 2010; Pacheco et al., 2010). This chapter gives an insight into the field of sustainable entrepreneurship, by describing in what way sustainable entrepreneurs contribute to environment and society and how they identify business opportunities.

2.1 Sustainable Entrepreneurship

Companies are becoming more apparent as the core drivers of sustainable development, sustainable entrepreneurs and sustainability managers shape markets and society with their innovations (Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011). Where incumbents try to reduce their negative effects on environment and society through corporate greening, sustainable entrepreneurs come up with sustainable solutions which destroy old markets and create new ones (Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011). Entrepreneurs can be the solution to environmental degradation rather than the cause of it (York & Venkataraman, 2010).

Individuals and companies that make the creation of environmental and societal value their core business can be called sustainable entrepreneurs (Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011). Sustainability is: *“the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”* (WCED, 1987). With regard to resources this means that renewable resources should be used when possible, and non-renewable resources should be recycled or used less (Hall et al., 2010). Sustainable entrepreneurs develop and deliver products, services, processes and business models which reduce the impact on the environment and increase the quality of life (Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011). Sustainable entrepreneurship has been defined in various ways in the extant literature (Cohen & Winn, 2007; Dean & McMullen, 2007; Hall et al., 2010; Hockerts & Wustenhagen, 2010; Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011). In this thesis the definition by (Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011) will be used:

“Sustainable entrepreneurship takes place in new and established companies and focuses on delivering profitable products and services aimed at a mass market while either minimizing negative consequences or maximizing positive impact on the environment and society”.

Sustainable entrepreneurial activity is positively influenced by social norms and government incentives regarding societal and environmental issues (Meek, Pacheco, & York, 2010). Small new companies are better able to integrate sustainability into their core business, whereas large incumbents are better able to deliver sustainable products and services to a mass market (Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011). Hockerts and Wustenhagen (2010) argue that in the transformation of industries towards sustainability, small new companies will have a leading role in taking sustainable business opportunities and will be followed by large incumbents. However sustainable entrepreneurs don't just help incumbents and extant institutions to reach their sustainability goals, but they can also create a whole new market with their sustainable products, services and business models (York & Venkataraman, 2010).

2.1.1 Sustainability in existing businesses

Sustainable entrepreneurs in new and existing businesses can come up with a range of sustainability innovations, Carillo-Hermosilla, del Rio, and Konnola (2010) have categorized these in end-of-the-pipe, eco-efficient and eco-effective innovations, which can be seen in table 1. Hockerts and Wustenhagen (2010) argue that only entrepreneurs who come up with radical innovations in new businesses can be called sustainable entrepreneurs. Strategy in SME's concerning sustainability goes from a resistant stance to the implementation of fully sustainable business models (Klewitz & Hansen, 2014). There is a wide range of business models which incorporate sustainability, for an overview see the work of (Bocken, Short, & Evans, 2014) in appendix 7.1.

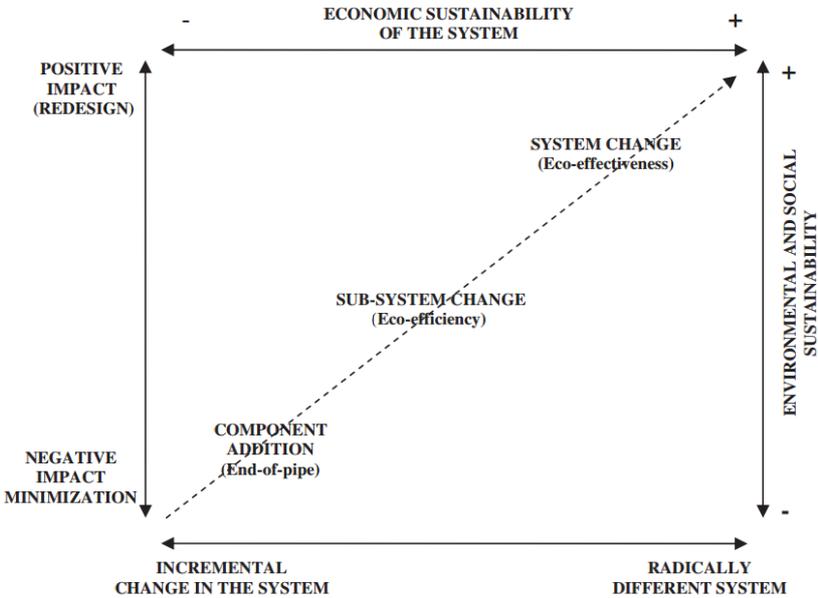


Table 1: Sustainability innovations (Carillo-Hermosilla, del Rio, & Konnola, 2010)

End-of-the-pipe innovations are incremental innovations, which minimize and repair the negative impact on the environment without changing the production process. These innovations involve extra costs, but do increase for example local air and water quality and are only a temporary solution to sustainability challenges (Carillo-Hermosilla et al., 2010).

Eco-efficient innovations are more radical than end-of-the-pipe solutions and involve a sub-system change, which reduces the negative impact of production on the environment and society. By making production processes more efficient, less resources are needed and less waste and pollution is produced. Eco-efficiency is also seen as a temporary solution, as economic growth neutralizes the positive impact eco-efficiency creates (Carillo-Hermosilla et al., 2010).

Eco-effective innovations are the most radical of the three and require a complete system change. The change involves a redesign of the production process from linear to cyclical and a change in production and consumption patterns (Carillo-Hermosilla et al., 2010). In linear, Cradle-to-Grave systems, products are discarded at the end of their life cycle. In circular, Cradle-to-Cradle systems, at the end of their useful life products can either be put back into another production process or when biodegradable, into nature (Braungart, McDonough, & Bollinger, 2007; McDonough & Braungart, 2002). Moving towards a circular economy is seen as way towards sustainability, which does more than just improving existing production processes (Carillo-Hermosilla et al., 2010; WEF, 2014).

There is a difference in how sustainability-driven and profit-driven entrepreneurs integrate sustainability into the core business (Parrish, 2010). Parrish (2010) looked at how sustainable entrepreneurs, when creating economic, environmental and social value, design their business, and which decisions they take. Much of the literature on sustainable entrepreneurship assumes that entrepreneurs are driven by self-interest and profit, and create win-win situations wherein they do well for environment and society while making a profit (Cohen & Winn, 2007; Dean & McMullen, 2007). By integrating sustainability into the core business, profit-driven entrepreneurs can gain bottom and top line returns, in the form of reduced input costs and increased revenues (Ambec & Lanoie, 2008; Nidumolu, Prahalad, & Rangaswami, 2009; Porter & Van der Linde, 1995). In practice sustainable entrepreneurs aren't necessarily driven by the prospect of profits, but are driven by their own values and motives and opt for a long-term survival of their business by living up to these values and motives (Schlange, 2009). Parrish (2010) calls this way of thinking "perpetual reasoning", and has revealed five principles which sustainability-driven entrepreneurs apply while designing an organization. In table 2, the principles of perpetual reasoning are set beside those of "traditional" exploitative reasoning.

Organization design requirement	Principles of “perpetual reasoning”	Principles of “exploitative reasoning”
Purpose- justifying existence	Resource perpetuation	Resource exploitation
Efficiency – achieving synergies	Benefit stacking	Least-cost economizing
Tradeoffs – balancing competing objectives	Strategic satisficing	Single-objective maximizing
Criteria – prioritizing decision choices	Qualitative management	Quantitative management
Inducements – allocating benefits	Worthy contribution	Claims of power

Table 2: Comparison of perpetual and exploitative reasoning (Parrish, 2010)

In perpetual reasoning, resource perpetuation is a business goal, sustainability-driven entrepreneurs try to stretch the time that natural and human resources can be used as long as possible. In selecting organizational activities, sustainability-driven entrepreneurs seek to maximize the benefits of each activity for as many stakeholders as possible. Profit-driven entrepreneurs on the other hand seek to exploit resources they have and don't maximize benefits, but minimize costs. When trade-offs have to be made, these profit-driven entrepreneurs seek to maximize the “profit” of a single objective. Sustainability-driven entrepreneurs don't maximize profit but try to come to a satisfactory balance between different objectives. In making decisions qualitative factors are most important for sustainability driven entrepreneurs their priority is to become better, while for conventional entrepreneurs quantitative outcomes are more important, they just want more. The last principle of perpetual reasoning is the principle of worthy contribution. Sustainability-driven entrepreneurs prefer to give benefits to stakeholders based on how much they're worth for the company, these benefits can be in the form of payments, personal development, access to resources and opportunities. In conventional businesses, most benefits go to the stakeholders who possess most of the business' resources, most likely the owner (Parrish, 2010).

2.2 Entrepreneurial opportunities

Research on the identification of sustainable business opportunities is scarce. Entrepreneurship is the link between the presence of business opportunities and the presence of entrepreneurial individuals (Venkataraman, 1997). In the past entrepreneurship research tended to focus solely on the individuals who establish new businesses. This view of entrepreneurship is incomplete because it does not include the quality of opportunities which people identify (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Venkataraman (1997) defines entrepreneurship research as follows, “*The field of entrepreneurship research seeks to understand how opportunities to bring into existence “future” goods and services are discovered, created, and exploited, by whom, and with what consequences*”. There is an increasing interest in

entrepreneurial opportunities, but it remains unclear how opportunities to bring into existence “future” goods and services are discovered, created and exploited (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000).

In the field of sustainable entrepreneurship a few authors have sought to give an insight into the identification and sources of sustainable business opportunities. Dean and McMullen (2007) and Cohen and Winn (2007) argue that environmental degradation is caused by market imperfections and that these represent opportunities for entrepreneurs. Pacheco et al. (2010) build on existing entrepreneurship literature and argue that sustainable opportunities can be discovered or created by entrepreneurs.

2.2.1 Opportunities in market imperfections

Cohen and Winn (2007) Use four different market imperfections to theorize on where and how sustainable opportunities can be identified. To explain this identification process they use the categories of entrepreneurial opportunities by (Sarasvathy et al., 2003), the allocation, discovery and creation views. These views of opportunity identification can be distinguished by the existence or non-existence of supply and demand streams and the availability of information about these streams. In the allocation view, existing supply and demand streams have to be brought together, information is abundant and available to everyone, so in theory everyone is equally likely to detect an opportunity. In the discovery view, either a supply or a demand stream exists. There is an opportunity for the entrepreneur in identifying the non-existent stream of supply or demand. Information is available but not distributed equally amongst potential entrepreneurs. In the creation view both supply and demand streams have to be created by the entrepreneur, opportunities don't exist independently of the entrepreneur, information about the market is limited (Sarasvathy et al., 2003).

Inefficient markets: Natural resources are used to produce a product, the use of these resources is inefficient and results in waste (Cohen & Winn, 2007). For example making a semiconductor chip, results in more than 100.000 times the weight of the end product in waste (Cohen & Winn, 2007). Resources are extracted from virgin sources rather than from waste streams (Cohen & Winn, 2007). There are opportunities for entrepreneurs in the reallocation of resources, which should result in a more efficiently operating market which minimizes waste (Cohen & Winn, 2007).

Externalities exist: A negative externality exists when a firm's behavior results in negative effects on the environment and these negative effects are not reflected in the price of the products or services of this firm (Dean & McMullen, 2007). Some examples of negative externalities are acid rain and smog, firms can pollute air and water but don't pay for their pollution (Cohen & Winn, 2007). Cohen and Winn (2007) argue that opportunities to solve these negative externalities are most likely identified by discovery or creation. End-of-the pipe, eco-efficient and eco-effective innovations will be able to provide solutions to environmental problems caused by externalities (Carillo-Hermosilla et al., 2010; Cohen & Winn, 2007).

Flawed pricing mechanisms: Non-renewable natural resources such as oil or gas are underpriced and undervalued (Kurz & Salvadori, 1997). Normally, in a perfectly competitive market, demand and supply determine the price of goods. Cohen and Winn (2007) argue that renewable natural resources are undervalued, because they are not priced at all and non-renewable natural resources are priced as if they were renewable resources. It's hard to assign ownership rights to resources such as clean air or water which are freely available to everyone (Hardin, 1968). New markets in which resources are properly valued have to be created, this will most likely occur through the creation of entrepreneurial opportunities (Cohen & Winn, 2007).

Imperfectly distributed information: Companies and consumers don't have perfect information about prices, products and the market. Consumers for example don't know how much energy they use in their homes, and what the costs and advantages of for example solar energy are. They lack information and therefore make decisions that are harmful to the environment and their own bank account (Cohen & Winn, 2007). Entrepreneurs can discover sustainable business opportunities in leveraging informational advantages, by providing information, through for example setting certification standards (Cohen & Winn, 2007).

2.2.2 The nature of opportunities: Creation and Discovery

Pacheco et al. (2010) argue that in contexts in which sustainable behavior is rewarded by extant economic systems, opportunities are discovered and contexts in which sustainable behavior is not rewarded, opportunities are created. This categorization is based on the work of (Alvarez & Barney, 2007), which is different in certain ways from the discovery and creation view by (Sarasvathy et al., 2003).

Both the creation and discovery view by (Alvarez & Barney, 2007) assume that opportunities exist when there are competitive imperfections, but they explain the origin of these imperfections in different ways. To explain the difference between discovering an opportunity and creating one, (Alvarez & Barney, 2007) use the analogy of climbing a mountain. In the discovery view the mountain climber will look for a mountain and then climb it, in the creation view the mountain climber first builds a mountain and then climbs it (Alvarez & Barney, 2007).

In the discovery view, entrepreneurial opportunities exist independent of entrepreneurs, and can be 'discovered' and exploited by the "alert" entrepreneur (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). Opportunities are objective phenomena formed by exogenous shocks which disrupt the competitive equilibrium, these can be technological, political, regulatory, social or demographic changes (Shane, 2003). The "alert" entrepreneur scans the environment searching for new opportunities, and selects the opportunity with the highest expected returns (Casson & Wadeson, 2007). As these objective phenomena are in theory visible to everyone, the question arises "why do some people and not others discover opportunities?"

Shane (2003) gives two reasons, firstly some people have better access to information and secondly some people are better able to recognize opportunities with the amount of information available.

Creation theory assumes that opportunities don't exist as objective phenomena but are created through the actions of the entrepreneur (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). Opportunities, are formed endogenously by the entrepreneur and don't exist independently of the entrepreneur. Returning to the mountain analogy, instead of looking for a mountain to climb, entrepreneurs build the mountain and then climb it (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). The process of the creation of an opportunity is path dependent, minor differences in decisions can lead to major differences in outcomes over time (Arthur, 1989).

Opportunities that are discovered have connections with industries and markets which are known beforehand, for created opportunities these connections aren't known beforehand. The decision making context in which an entrepreneur identifies and exploits a discovery opportunity is assumed to be risky. In discovery theory opportunities are objective phenomena, and the entrepreneur, as a decision maker, can collect information about a decision and use this to predict the riskiness of his actions. The more time an entrepreneur gathers information, the better he will be able to anticipate the outcome of a decision with the help of this information. On the other hand there is the uncertain decision making context, associated with the creation view of opportunities. In the uncertain decision making context, entrepreneurs can't gather information in order to predict the riskiness of a decision, because there is no information about markets and products which still have to be created (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). The creation of opportunities often goes combined with the creation of new markets (Alvarez & Barney, 2007).

Returning to (Pacheco et al., 2010), sustainable entrepreneurship opportunities can be created or discovered. Pacheco et al. (2010) theorize that, where sustainable initiatives are rewarded by extant economic systems, entrepreneurs can identify sustainable business opportunities through discovery. However when, economic systems are not rewarding sustainable behavior, and sustainable behavior is punished in the form of competitive disadvantage, entrepreneurs will find themselves in a 'green prison'. To escape the green prison, entrepreneurs have to influence institutions of the economic system which are: government regulations, industry norms and property rights. In doing so, entrepreneurs will be able to influence the incentives that lead to sustainable behavior, and thus create opportunities endogenously (Pacheco et al., 2010).

2.2.3 The process of opportunity identification: Effectuation and causation

Discovery theory is widely recognized in the extant literature, while creation theory is still evolving as a single theory in literature (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). A range of authors have described the creation of opportunities under different names, entrepreneurial bricolage (Baker & Nelson, 2005), instantiation (Sarason, Dean, & Dillard, 2006), and effectuation (Sarasvathy, 2001). The causation and

effectuation theory by (Sarasvathy, 2001) offers a practical view on the discovery and creation process of business opportunities.

Entrepreneurs can identify opportunities, through “causation” or “effectuation” (Sarasvathy, 2001). In a causation process an effect is taken as given and the right means are selected to create that effect (Sarasvathy, 2001). Effectuation processes, on the other hand, take a set of means as given and see what effects can be generated by combining these means (Sarasvathy, 2001). Sarasvathy (2001) uses the analogy of cooking a meal to explain these two processes. In the causation process, the cook will decide what will be on the menu, will select the right ingredients, go to the supermarket to buy the ingredients, and cook the meal. In the effectuation process, the cook doesn’t know what will be on the menu, he’ll look in the cupboard to see which ingredients are available and will combine the available ingredients to cook a meal.

Effectuation	Causation
Affordable loss	Expected returns
Strategic alliances	Competitive analyses
Exploitation of contingencies	Exploitation of preexisting knowledge
Controlling an unpredictable future	Predicting an uncertain future

Table 3: Effectuation and Causation principles (Sarasvathy, 2001)

Table 3 shows characteristics of entrepreneurs following the effectuation or causation logic. An effectuation process starts when a potential entrepreneur starts getting the idea of creating some sort of business. The entrepreneur will assess which physical, human and organizational means he has by asking himself: “Who am I? What do I know? Whom do I know?” (Sarasvathy, 2001). The amount of means or resources an entrepreneur uses, is the loss affordable to him in case of failure. The entrepreneur will define business goals based on the different effects that can be achieved with the available means. By interacting with people in his surroundings the entrepreneur will assess the feasibility of his business goals. If there’s no demand for his business, he’ll have to reassess or expand the means he has and the effects he can achieve with these means (Sarasvathy, 2001). Contingencies that come up unexpectedly can be exploited by the entrepreneur and used to reassess his means and goals (Dew, Read, Sarasvathy, & Wiltbank, 2009). When there’s demand for his business he’ll be able to form strategic alliances and get pre-commitments from stakeholders such as suppliers and customers. These pre-commitments can be used to reduce uncertainty and erect entry barriers. In this way an entrepreneur will be able to create an opportunity and create a new market (Sarasvathy, 2001). In the effectuation process, entrepreneurs operate under conditions of uncertainty and try to control the factors they can control rather than predicting outcomes.

In a causation process on the other hand, an entrepreneur has a business goal in mind and selects the means he needs to maximize expected returns. Entrepreneurs in a causation process use available

information and preexisting knowledge to make predictions and competitive analyses of the market. By predicting the possible outcomes, they try to control the future (Sarasvathy, 2001). A causation process is typically associated with obtaining market share in an existing market, while effectuation is associated with creating new markets (Sarasvathy, 2001).

2.2.4 Distinguishing between discovery and creation of an opportunity

Ex post it will always be possible to interpret the opportunity identification as either a discovery or creation process (Alvarez & Barney, 2007; Sarasvathy et al., 2003). Alvarez and Barney (2007) argue that in order to make a distinction between creation and discovery, one has to look at the entrepreneurial actions that are taken in the opportunity identification process. On the one hand there is the discovery context which is assumed to be risky and on the other hand there is the creation context which is assumed to be uncertain. Certain entrepreneurial actions are more effective in a risky context while others are more effective in an uncertain context. The actions an entrepreneur takes suggest the assumptions he makes about the context he is operating in. When the entrepreneur doesn't make the right assumption about the context, he'll take the wrong actions and won't be able to effectively identify and exploit the opportunity (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). Table 4 presents the model set up by (Alvarez & Barney, 2007).

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	Based on expertise	Based on charisma
<i>Decision Making</i>	Risk-based data collection and decision making Importance of opportunity costs	Use of biases and heuristics Importance of affordable loss
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>	Specific human capital recruited broadly	General and flexible human capital recruited from preexisting social networks
<i>Strategy</i>	Relatively complete and unchanging	Emergent and changing
<i>Finance</i>	External capital sources: Banks and venture capital firms	'Bootstrapping' and 'friends, families, and fools'
<i>Marketing</i>	Marketing mix doesn't change and can be specified at start	Marketing mix may fundamentally change as a result of new opportunities that emerge
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>	Speed, secrecy, and erecting barriers	Advantages through learning Barriers through strategic alliances and pre-commitments

Table 4: Entrepreneurial action in discovery and creation contexts (Alvarez & Barney, 2007)

Leadership: In a discovery opportunity, the entrepreneur will most likely rely on expertise as the opportunity will be related in some way to already existing industries (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). The entrepreneur will rely on his knowledge and experience about related industries, to understand how an

opportunity was formed by exogenous shocks and how to exploit this opportunity (Shane, 2000). In the creation process of an opportunity, the relation of an opportunity to already existing industries is unknown, and expertise won't be that important. The entrepreneur, as a leader needs to rely on his ability to bring together and inspire people who have the expertise to exploit an opportunity. When exploiting a creation opportunity, charismatic leaders will be more successful than expert leaders (Alvarez & Barney, 2005). Charisma and expertise are both important while identifying opportunities through discovery or creation, however expertise more so in discovery opportunities, and charisma more so in creation opportunities (Alvarez & Barney, 2007).

Decision Making: To be able to predict the risk associated with their actions, entrepreneurs can collect and analyze data and base their decisions on this (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). In the discovery context it's assumed that entrepreneurs understand the opportunity cost of a decision, the value of the opportunity they don't choose (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). On the other hand, entrepreneurs exploiting creation opportunities, operate under uncertainty and can't predict the outcomes of their actions (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). Instead they use heuristics and biases to make decisions (Busenitz & Barney, 1997). As they can't predict the outcomes of their actions they also can't predict the opportunity costs of their decisions, the entrepreneurs instead use the "affordable loss" principle (Sarasvathy, 2001). Alvarez and Barney (2007) argue that risk based decision methods are more useful in discovery context while using heuristics, biases or the affordable loss principle is more useful in the creation context.

Human Resource Practices: A range of human resource practices is important for the exploitation of both the creation and discovery of opportunities, but there are differences in how new employees are recruited. In the process of a discovery opportunity it is clear what the opportunity is and what skills and expertise are needed. The entrepreneur will be able to hire those individuals who possess these specific skills and will hire people who are outside of his social network. In the creation context however, it is not entirely clear which specific skills and expertise are needed to exploit the opportunity. Recruitment will be more general and flexible and new employees will most likely be found in the social network of the entrepreneur (Alvarez & Barney, 2007).

Strategy: The difference in the availability of information in the discovery and creation context also has an impact on which strategy is most appropriate (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). When an opportunity has been discovered, usually enough information will be available to make assumptions about which strategy fits the opportunity. The entrepreneur has to select the right means that result in the desired effect (Sarasvathy, 2001). For entrepreneurs operating in the discovery context, it's normally not necessary to change the strategy over time although minor modifications may be made (Shane & Delmar, 2004). When an opportunity is created, conditions are uncertain, and normally not enough information is available to define a strategy. By interacting with people in his surroundings, the

entrepreneur will most likely have to reassess his business goals a few times (Sarasvathy, 2001). Effective strategies in this context will be flexible and emergent (Alvarez & Barney, 2007).

Finance: Financing is necessary for the survival and growth of new firms (Cassar, 2004). In conditions of uncertainty and high information asymmetry between the entrepreneur and financier, it's difficult to obtain financing from traditional sources such as venture capital funds and banks (Bhide, 1992; Davila, Foster, & Gupta, 2003). In the discovery context, the entrepreneur can reduce the information asymmetry by explaining the business opportunity and the risks involved and thus be able to gain access to traditional sources of financing. In the creation context, traditional sources probably won't want to finance the entrepreneur or want the entrepreneur to exploit an already identified opportunity (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). Other sources of financing are more likely to be used, such as financing from own funds, family, friends and fools, this way of financing is known as 'bootstrapping' (Bhide, 1992; Ebben & Johnson, 2006). These capital sources thus don't invest in a clear business opportunity, but in the character, flexibility and creativity of the entrepreneur (Alvarez & Barney, 2007).

Marketing: To exploit an opportunity it's important to market it and be able to specify the product, price, distribution channel, promotion strategy and customer service strategy. In the discovery context an opportunity has been formed by an exogenous shock (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). The entrepreneur has enough information about the opportunity and will thus be able to specify the marketing mix, so he can select the means that result in the desired effect (Sarasvathy, 2001). In the creation context however, the entrepreneur doesn't know whom to market the product to and what the marketing mix should be. Instead the entrepreneur should experiment with the marketing mix to see what opportunities can be created (Alvarez & Barney, 2007; Sarasvathy, 2001).

Sustaining competitive advantages: When an entrepreneur knows how to describe and exploit an opportunity which he has discovered, this will soon be known to other entrepreneurs. Setting up entry barriers, speed and secrecy are vital to maintain a competitive advantage, as other entrepreneurs will also start to exploit the opportunity (Alvarez & Barney, 2007; Barney, 1991). Because of the uncertainty surrounding the opportunity in the creation context it will not be likely that other entrepreneurs will know more about the opportunity (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). Alvarez and Barney (2007) argue that because of the learning process which is involved in the creation of an opportunity, it's likelier that other entrepreneurs know less than the entrepreneur who's creating the opportunity. This will create a sustaining competitive advantage, and no entry barriers, secrecy or speed is needed. An entrepreneur will however be able to form entry barriers by the strategic alliances and pre-commitments with potential suppliers and customers (Sarasvathy, 2001).

2.3 Conclusion

Companies are becoming more apparent as the core drivers of sustainable development, and small new companies are best at integrating sustainability into their core business (Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011). The products and services of sustainable entrepreneurs are aimed at a mass market and minimize the negative consequences or maximize the positive impact on the nature and society (Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011). Sustainable entrepreneurs aren't necessarily driven by profits (Schlange, 2009), and design their business in a different way than conventional entrepreneurs (Parrish, 2010).

Research on the identification of sustainable business opportunities is scarce, however entrepreneurship literature provides two views of how opportunities can be identified (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). Entrepreneurial opportunities can be discovered by the alert entrepreneur and lie waiting around to be discovered. Opportunities which are created don't lie around waiting to be discovered, but are formed by the actions of the entrepreneur (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). Ex post it will always be possible to describe opportunity formation as either a discovery or creation process (Alvarez & Barney, 2007; Sarasvathy et al., 2003). To define ex post whether an opportunity has been formed through discovery or creation, one has to look at the entrepreneurial actions the entrepreneur took while setting up his company (Alvarez & Barney, 2007).

3. Research Methods

3.1 Research Design

Academic literature in the field of sustainable entrepreneurship has been more prescriptive than descriptive and empirical research is needed to answer a range of issues (Hall et al., 2010). This thesis has the purpose to gain a fuller understanding of what is going on in practice by doing empirical research and takes the form of a descriptive study (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). A literature research is conducted to get an overview of the extant perceptions of what sustainable entrepreneurs are and how they identify business opportunities. This is followed by an empirical research in which interviews with Dutch sustainable entrepreneurs are conducted in order to find out how they identified their business opportunities.

The descriptive character of this research asks for empirical research in the form of interviews. A qualitative approach fits this research because open-ended questions will most likely provide answers to the research question (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The qualitative research is cross-sectional, as interviews are conducted at one point in time (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). For this topic, a longitudinal research is an interesting alternative, but not feasible. This would require a search for sustainable entrepreneurs who are in the process of identifying a business opportunity. This is not possible due to time limitations and one can't know whether an entrepreneur who is in the process of opportunity identification will actually establish a business.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

3.2.1 Sampling strategy

The research sample was selected from the population of Dutch sustainable entrepreneurs who have established product-based companies. A non-probability sampling technique was applied, because the total population of sustainable entrepreneurs in the Netherlands is unknown (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The participants for the interviews were selected through a purposive sampling strategy. Purposive sampling has the advantage that the best suitable participants for the research can be selected (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The sample consists of typical cases of sustainable entrepreneurs who established product-based companies and have integrated sustainability into their core business, thus have a positive impact on both nature and society and are eco-effective. The focus lies on small companies, as these are better able to integrate sustainability into their core business (Hockerts & Wustenhagen, 2010), and it is likelier that the entrepreneur who established the company is still involved. The sample consists of sustainable companies from different industries as there are not enough potential respondents per industry. Next to that the purpose of this research is not to give an insight into one specific industry but rather into how sustainable business opportunities in general are identified.

The sampling strategy resulted in 13 respondents, a more detailed description of the sampling process is given after the overview of the respondents in table 5. More background information about each company can be found in the company profiles in appendix 7.3.

Company	Product	Entrepreneur
African Clean Energy	Cook stoves	Ruben Walker
Arctic Blue	Fish oil	Ludo van de Wiel
Beeboxx	Moving boxes	Peter-Jan Hulsebosch
Closing The Loop	Used mobile phones	Joost de Kluijver
GrownDownTown	Rooftop gardens	Philip van Traa
Hemel Bed	Coffins	Madelon Reverman
Herso	Tables	Rik Ruigrok
Instock	Restaurant	Selma Seddik
Moyee Coffee	Coffee	Guido van Staveren
Mywheels	Car sharing	Henry Mentink
Starsock	Socks	Eric Roosen
Soupalicious	Soup & Catering	Milco Aarts
Weder	Furniture	Caroline Molenaar

Table 5: Overview respondents

Several online and offline platforms where sustainable entrepreneurs can find information or meet were used to find suitable respondents. In table 6 an overview of the used platforms and the size of their business network is given.

Platform	Size of business network
MVO Nederland	2302 companies
De Groene Zaak	190
Stichting Doen	171
De Groene Bocht	23
Amsterdam Impact Hub	15

Table 6: Overview platforms for sustainable entrepreneurs

The main platform for sustainable companies in the Netherlands is MVO Nederland, (www.MVONederland.nl) and has been set up by the ministry of Economic Affairs. The purpose of this platform is to inform existing and new companies about sustainable entrepreneurship and foster collaboration in the field of sustainability between companies. Their business network is extensive and consists of 2302 companies from different sectors which have implemented end-of-the-pipe, eco-efficient or eco-effective solutions. “De Groene Zaak”(www.degroenzaak.com), a business network with 190 partners and “Doen” foundation (www.doen.nl) with 171 projects and companies were also

used to find sustainable entrepreneurs. Next to that the networks of two companies which offer office space and meeting places for sustainable entrepreneurs were used (www.degroenebocht.nl) and (<http://amsterdam.impacthub.net>). These last two have 23 and 15 businesses in their networks.

Criteria	Number of companies
Network MVO Nederland	2302
Only product-based companies	1264
Small companies less than 100 employees	1014
Eco-effective companies	130
Additional search other platforms	145
Typical cases	45
<i>Respondents</i>	<i>13</i>

Table 7: Selection procedure

An overview of the selection procedure and the selection criteria can be seen in table 7. The selection started with the network of MVO Nederland, of the 2302 companies in their network, 1264 companies are product-based, and the rest are service-based. This research focuses on small companies, the first selection criteria was size, using this list of companies, size could only be measured in number of employees. All companies with more than a 100 employees were excluded from the search, from the 1264 companies remained 1014. Only companies with eco-effective solutions, good for both society and nature, were selected, this resulted in 130 companies. The information provided by MVO Nederland about a company, and information from the company's website were used to assess whether a company is eco-effective or not. Almost all sustainable companies that can be found on the websites of "de Groene Zaak", "Doen", "de Groene Bocht" and "the Amsterdam Impact Hub" can also be found in the database of "MVO Nederland". In the database of MVO Nederland some firms are incorrectly labeled as service-based firms and were therefore not found in the search, the other platforms were used to find these companies. Other issues with this database are that sometimes information is incomplete or not detailed enough to pass the first selection. On these other platforms the same selection criteria, product-based firm, size, eco-effectiveness, were used to select firms. This resulted in another 15 companies and brought the sample to 145 companies which were categorized per industry. There was a maximum of 30 companies per industry and a goal to get 10-15 respondents, it was thus not possible to get enough respondents in one industry because a very high response rate would be needed. The sample was further reduced from 145 companies to 45 companies by selecting only the typical cases which are small companies which are eco-effective and have a positive impact on both nature and society. Also the criteria that the company has to be transparent about its impact on nature and society and has to be already selling its products, was used.

These 45 companies were contacted by e-mail, the purpose of the research was explained and they were asked whether they would like to collaborate in the research. The emails resulted in 10

respondents. The companies that did not respond to the e-mail were contacted by phone, this resulted in another 3 respondents. The other 32 companies gave different reasons for not being able to participate in the research, they were too busy, already had projects running with other students or the entrepreneur who had established the company had left.

3.2.2 Data Collection

In this research primary qualitative data is collected through semi-structured interviews (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The interviews are recorded, and the audios are transcribed into text. Primary data is obtained because the availability of secondary data is limited and when available, might not fit the purpose of this research (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Secondary data, from the company website and press releases is supportive and used to get an overview of the company's activities. The entrepreneurs or founders of small sustainable businesses are interviewed. The semi-structured interviews are made up of a list of topics which are derived from the theoretical framework of this research. For each topic, there is a set of predetermined questions which form the main structure of the interviews. The interview can be found in appendix 7.2.

Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to formulate open questions which are based on relevant topics. Depending on the answer of the participant, different predetermined follow-up questions can be asked. It is also possible to exclude questions from the interview or add new questions based on the replies of the participants. Semi-structured interviews are used because it's uncertain what answers participants will give, and the questions asked are complicated (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The interviews are preferably one-on-one and face-to-face, recording and transcribing an interview with more than two or three participants is difficult.

3.2.3 Data Analysis

The semi-structured interviews which are conducted in this research are recorded and transcribed in order to prepare them for analysis. Before analysis, the transcripts are sent for approval to the participants. A qualitative data analysis technique is used, first the transcript is coded into different categories. The categories are derived from the topic list which is used in the interviews. The coded data from the transcript are put in a data display which provides a structured overview of the relevant data. This data display is used to write-up the results chapter and provide conclusions for the central question of this research (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The data displays can be found in appendix 7.4.

3.3 Validity and reliability

Some factors might pose threats to the validity and reliability of this research. External validity is the extent to which the conclusions from a research are generalizable to other settings (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The generalizability of the findings might be threatened, because of the non-probability sampling strategy and the relatively small scale of this research. However due to time restrictions,

increasing the number of participants is not an option, therefore to reduce the threat to external validity, participants are carefully selected. Participant selection is based on whether these entrepreneurs have integrated sustainability into their core business. Internal validity is the extent to which the research methods used, accurately measure what they were intended to measure and whether the research findings are really about the different subjects of the theoretical framework (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The fact that ex post information about opportunities can always be interpreted as both created or discovered is a major threat to internal validity (Alvarez & Barney, 2007; Sarasvathy et al., 2003). To reduce this threat the main part of the interview will consist of questions about the entrepreneurial actions an entrepreneur took (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). Only typical cases are selected and the companies that are selected, decide themselves whether they want to cooperate in the interviews. This self-selection might pose a threat to the validity of the research as one doesn't know beforehand why a company wants to cooperate.

Reliability refers to the extent to which data collection methods and analysis procedures will produce consistent findings (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The reliability of the research findings and conclusions might be threatened because of biases and errors from the subjects and observer. Subject bias will be reduced by explaining to the participants in advance what this research is about. Subject error can be minimized by letting the participants choose where and at which time they want to be interviewed. Observer error will be reduced through the use of semi-structured interviews, these are based on a list of relevant topics which are derived from existent academic literature. For each topic there is a set of predetermined questions. To reduce the observer bias the transcripts and data displays of the interviews are made and provided in appendix 7.4.

4. Results

The results from the interviews are presented in this chapter. This chapter starts with a description of why these entrepreneurs establish sustainable businesses and what characterizes these sustainable entrepreneurs. Then a section about different entrepreneurial actions explains what these sustainable entrepreneurs do. The last section provides a description of how opportunities are identified and turned into a business.

4.1 Sustainable Entrepreneurship

All entrepreneurs show characteristics of the principles of perpetual reasoning described by (Parrish, 2010). A notable similarity between all the sustainable entrepreneurs who were interviewed is that they want to make the world a better place and have a positive impact on nature and society. Some of them have had this desire all of their life such as Eric Roosen of Starsock, *“When I die, the world should be more beautiful than when I got here”*. They have a positive impact by coming up with sustainable substitutes of existing products such as Artic Blue fish oil, coming up with completely new ways of using a product such as Henry Mentink of Mywheels, one of the early pioneers of car sharing, or they close the loop and create value from waste.

The goal of these entrepreneurs is resource perpetuation, many of them see it as their mission to convince others of the need to change behavior and the way resources are used. By having a company and selling products they can have an impact on nature and society. Some entrepreneurs want to transform existing markets with their products, others want to create awareness on sustainability issues. For example, the pop-up restaurant Instock which serves meals from waste food from supermarkets, tries to create awareness around the topic of food waste. Other entrepreneurs try to transform markets such as Guido van Staveren of Moyee, who was surprised about how little of the added value of coffee remained in the countries where it was produced. Moyee coffee distributes this added value more equally and wants to compete with the big multinationals, *“We didn’t start to sell coffee, just to sell coffee, we’re an A-typical company, and want to change the coffee industry”*. While others, such as African Clean Energy and Beeboxx see the potential to earn money while selling products with a positive impact on nature and society.

Instead of selling only products, many of these entrepreneurs sell products with a story. These stories target people who share the entrepreneur’s ideals and think businesses can be organized differently. Some of these entrepreneurs sell products which are like any other non-sustainable product, the story behind the product is what makes it unique. Eric Roosen says, *“It is a strategic choice to be able to tell the sustainability message with the least interesting product, socks”*, *“They don’t buy socks as a product, but they buy the story”*. To tell and sell their story these entrepreneurs try to find free media attention on the radio, newspapers or in documentaries. Caroline Molenaar of Weder says, *“Your stories need to stay with people, so you build stories around whatever you do”*. Only telling a story is

not enough explains Philip van Traa of Grown Downtown, *“Telling the story is of great importance, but if you don’t show a product, the whole story is in vain”*

Some of these entrepreneurs want to be part of the circular economy which means they try to perpetuate resources as long as possible by re-using, re-cycling, or up-cycling them. These companies create value from waste, for example Closing the Loop, sells used cell phones from the Netherlands in Africa, and buys broken cellphones in Africa to take out the valuable resources and thus re-uses and re-cycles. Instock up-cycles waste food to high quality restaurant meals, normally this edible food would be transformed into biogas. Other companies try to share the value which they create and are very transparent about this, for example Moyee which shares added value between coffee producing and coffee drinking countries. There are also a few companies, who call themselves inclusive companies, and involve people who are socially disadvantaged or have a handicap, in their production process. In this way less advantaged people not only have a worthy contribution, it’s also benefit stacking as by involving these people in the process, improves their livelihood while at the same time a product is made. There are also companies that just offer products which are better for your health and for the environment. A few entrepreneurs also want their products to be affordable to everyone and try to keep their price at a reasonable level. Herso and Hemel bed do this by for example putting restrictions on the margins retailers can put on their products.

When looking at how these entrepreneurs think about profit, it’s clearly visible that they apply the strategic satisficing principle. The importance of profit varies among entrepreneurs from on the one hand the more idealistic entrepreneurs such as Philip van Traa of GrownDowntown, *“I’m on a mission, and that’s not to see how much there’s on my bank account every morning”*. And on the other hand the entrepreneurs for whom the potential to make profit is an important condition when deciding to set up a company, Guido van Staveren of Moyee, *“I wouldn’t have done it if I wouldn’t have seen a profitable business model”*. Profit is seen as a tool which can be used to have an impact on nature and society. Ruben Walker of African Clean Energy believes that, *“If a company wants to be successful in reaching social goals, it also needs to be successful financially”*. Sustainable entrepreneurs don’t seek profit maximization but rather like to share the value they create, spread the message, include people in their activities and have fun. Profit is used to grow the company or sometimes partially donated to charity projects as in the case of Hemelbed and Soupalicious. Milco Aarts of Soupalicious states it as following, *“These companies are hybrid, they’re not looking for profit maximization, but do want to make a profit”*. These entrepreneurs invested money and time into their companies so they want to see some profit in return, but are not focused on profit maximization.

Striking is that many of the interviewed entrepreneurs don’t consider competitors as a threat. Some entrepreneurs welcome competitors and cooperate with them because their mission is to spread their ideals. Henry Mentink of Mywheels says, *“If you want to do something beautiful in the world, then*

you have to do it together and then there are no competitors". Other entrepreneurs welcome competitors because they want to make a change in the market they're active in. On their own they're too small, but because of other entrepreneurs entering the market or by creating alliances with like-minded entrepreneurs they're better able to make a change. Peter-Jan Hulsebosch of Beeboxx says, *"We encourage newcomers because we're trying to realize a change in consumer behavior"*. Guido van Staveren of Moyee tries to change the coffee market, *"My model is not to convince the big multinationals to take another course, my model is, I put a radical new model next to theirs and show that it works, and hope they'll copy it"*. Also Joost de Kluijver of Closing the Loop hopes big companies will pick up his business model as these companies can have a much bigger impact due to their size.

Many of the entrepreneurs form alliances with other companies and instances and work together in developing and producing their products. For example GrownDownTown works together with a big plant nursery to develop its products, and Hemel Bed involves the local social workshop for the assembly of coffins. Before starting a business many entrepreneurs speak with possible future suppliers and other business partners. Entrepreneurs do this to see whether there're other companies willing to work with them and to test their business idea. Milco Aarts of Soupalicious says, *"You go to different parties who you think might be interested, that's a test"*. If these partners are interested they might become suppliers or customers. Here signs of qualitative management can be seen, as entrepreneurs want to make their products and ideas better by forming alliances, rather than keeping it for themselves and increasing production and profits.

A few entrepreneurs have also stressed the importance of contingencies, things they need come along when the entrepreneur needs it. This can be in the form of people who are attracted by the ideology of the company, share the ideals of the entrepreneur and are intrinsically motivated to work for the company. As Eric Roosen says, *"Because we're special, we create a magnet, and special people, organizations and developments come to us"*. The people who get attracted don't always possess useful skills for the entrepreneur. Milco Aarts of Soupalicious gives another example, he had the plan to open a restaurant at some point but not right at the start of his business, he however got an offer for a nice location for a restaurant and took it. Another example is Caroline Molenaar of Weder, her whole company evolved because of contingencies, she got requests and orders and she encountered people who could help her. She says, *"We notice every time that you just have to do it, something comes on your path, and that's how it evolves, by contingencies that come up"*. Other entrepreneurs strongly believe in chance, and wait for new insights, new people to come up and help them, or for new things to happen.

4.2 Distinguishing the discovery or creation of an opportunity

But how do these entrepreneurs get involved in setting up a business? Some of them were already working in the industry with which their company has some connections. Others are entrepreneurs by profession and have set-up multiple businesses. There are entrepreneurs who get involved accidentally or by chance because someone asked them to come up with a solution to a problem such as in the case of Weder and Moyee, or someone asked them to design something as in the case of Hemelbed. These entrepreneurs realize while they are busy solving someone else's problem or request that their way of solving the problem could have business potential. Other entrepreneurs see or encounter problems themselves and come up with ideas to address or solve a problem which results in a business opportunity. They can either form the solution to these problems themselves or go looking for solutions in other countries or industries. Then there're entrepreneurs who started a business out of necessity, one entrepreneur was unemployed, another had a business that was going bankrupt and another entrepreneur wasn't being taken seriously as a sole trader. All the respondents started their businesses in different ways, built up their business differently and took different combinations of entrepreneurial actions. Returning aspects of establishing a company are that it involves a lot of setbacks, trial and error and a lot of hard work and perseverance.

Quite a few entrepreneurs state that another person could have identified the same opportunity. However one should be careful to assume then that these opportunities exist independent of the entrepreneur and thus have been discovered, as ex post this is hard to define. Respondents were asked about different entrepreneurial actions they took while setting up their business. Looking at these entrepreneurial actions helps explain in which context sustainable entrepreneurs believe they're in while establishing and growing their business and thus how they identified their business opportunity. An overview of the entrepreneurial actions the sustainable entrepreneurs took is given in table.

Leadership: Sustainable entrepreneurs use either industry expertise or experience as an entrepreneur, combined with charisma to lead their company. Some of them have established other companies and for them it was clear what they had to do to set up their sustainable business. Others have expertise in the industry their company is active in, but don't have much experience as an entrepreneur and learn being an entrepreneur by doing. According to the entrepreneurs anyone can get information about a specific industry, by learning or hiring someone, and use this to start a company. To make a company unique, the entrepreneur has to put his personal touch, vision or ideals into the products he sells. As Eric Roosen of Starsock says, *"If you, as an entrepreneur, can commercialize your personal characteristics, then you have something unique"*. This requires passion and belief in the product you're selling but also enthusiasm and interest in the story you're selling and telling. Expertise and charisma have to be in balance, everyone can get expertise in a certain field but charisma is not something anyone can learn.

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	Expertise in industry or as entrepreneur Expertise easily learned	Commercialize personal ideals Personality can't be learned
<i>Decision Making</i>	In line with goal of company/entrepreneur or investor	Gut-feeling, pilots Affordable loss
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>	Later phase: more specific skills needed, unclear whether recruited broadly	In the beginning: people attracted by ideals Recruited from own social networks, family and friends
<i>Strategy</i>	Strategy based on personal ideals, missions and a product Improvements through trial and error	Some companies change strategy from creating awareness with foundation to having an impact with a product
<i>Finance</i>	Later phase: (Impact) Investors	In the beginning: Own-money Crowdfunding
<i>Marketing</i>	Sustainable substitutes Target group bigger than expected	Recombination of concepts creates new market
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>	Scaling up fast Continuous innovation	Strategic alliances Learning advantages

Table 8: Overview results entrepreneurial action

Decision making: Whenever an entrepreneur makes a decision, he'll keep in mind his mission, personal ideals and the positive impact he wants to have with his product on nature and society. Joost de Kluijver of Closing the Loop says, "If you make a decision on a micro scale, you look whether that fits in the macro image". Most entrepreneurs say they make decisions based on gut-feeling, they do what they think is the right thing to do. Some of these decisions are, "no-brainers", where one option is obviously the best one. To test business concepts, or a specific way of working, entrepreneurs do pilots to check whether their gut-feeling was right and what the best option is. These entrepreneurs do not have the means to do extensive market analyses. Selma Seddik of Instock says, "When we like something, we won't do a market analysis, but rather take the opportunity enthusiastically".

However when entrepreneurs have obtained financing from investors or through subsidies they have to justify the decisions they make to these external parties. For example Peter-Jan Hulsebosch of Beeboxx always looks from an investor's point of view to his own business, to justify his decisions. Entrepreneurs tend to state they only make decisions on gut feeling but they also use the affordable loss principle when making decisions, for example Madelon Revermann who says "I go to fairs which funeral service providers organize to promote my product, but if they're too expensive I don't go".

Other examples are Rik Ruigrok of Herso who sold his van because he could get a good price for it and decided to rent a van whenever he needs one. Or Caroline Molenaar of Weder, who invested in a small van because she needed one.

Human resource practices: Entrepreneurs state that when you start setting up a company you can find people with the right skills in your own network. Entrepreneurs know which specific skills they don't have themselves and ask friends or family, who do possess these skills for help. They for example ask friends to build their website, or go with them to a promotional fair, this can be either voluntarily or paid. When the company starts growing, the entrepreneur can't do everything himself anymore and can't solely rely on temporary help of family and friends. Guido van Staveren, *"Now we're in a transition where you can see that the business model works and serious financing is coming in, we'll have to start hiring people who can really do something, who have talents rather than ideals"*. The entrepreneur has to go looking for people with specific skills, it is however unclear whether they recruit broadly or from their own network. Sometimes an entrepreneur doesn't have to go looking for people because people, attracted by the ideals of the company, offer to work for the company.

Strategy: None of the entrepreneurs changed the core idea of their strategy while they were setting up their company. Their strategy is based on their personal ideals, mission, and a certain type of product with which they want to have an impact. Some of these entrepreneurs wrote a business plan in advance in which they describe their strategy, while others have a strategy in mind and stick to it. By just doing it and learning from mistakes and what works and what not, entrepreneurs improve their strategy. Milco Aarts of Soupalicious says, *"You cut it up in phases, you can't do everything at once"*. For example the entrepreneurs of GrownDownTown and Weder didn't exactly know how their business would develop, but they both stuck to their personal mission of doing well and improving the world.

Some companies have strategies that do change, a few companies started as foundations with a strategy just to create awareness about certain environmental or societal problems. Such has Henry Mentink of Mywheels, who after his subsidy for his foundation to promote car sharing ran out, decided to turn the foundation into a business. Joost de Kluijver of Closing the Loop followed more or less the same path from a foundation to a commercial enterprise and says, *"It would now be fun to grow and evolve from an executing business to a more knowledge focused consulting business"*. The pop-up restaurant Instock was set up as a foundation, to test the business model. The entrepreneurs had written out a business plan but, *"The world changes too fast, at the moment you finish your plan, the world has already changed"*, they decided to start their business and gradually adjusted and improved their strategy.

Finance: Most of the entrepreneurs made a business plan and budget in which they assess what they need to start their company. They invest their own money or get friends involved, as investors and banks are either not interested in their business idea or the entrepreneur is opposed to getting investors

and banks involved. Two entrepreneurs got sponsoring from large companies with which they were already in contact, in one case the large company sponsored some capital and in the other they financed the development of new products.

“You can calculate really fast and easy what it’s going to cost to start” says Peter-Jan Hulsebosch of Beeboxx. There are also entrepreneurs who didn’t know what was exactly needed to start up their business, because they simply didn’t know what their business would be going to look like. Such as Rik Ruigrok of Herso, *“There’s an eruption, you start running for the lava, you don’t know how far the lava gets and whether there’ll be rocks falling out of the sky, you just start running and see where your legs will bring you”*. Other entrepreneurs wrote business plans but also mention that it’s hard to get the right information and calculate exactly what you’ll need. Joost de Kluijver of Closing the Loop says, *“That’s old economy thinking, it doesn’t fit with this business idea, and if you want to exactly calculate in advance what you need you’ll never start because that information is hard to get”* These entrepreneurs argue that once you start your business, many things change and you’ll always need things you didn’t expect you would need.

Some entrepreneurs tried at the start of their business to get capital through bank loans or investors. Although they had their business plans and budgets worked out, they couldn’t get capital this way. Several entrepreneurs who have proved their business models work, are now looking for capital from (impact) investors. Only Moyee has been successful in raising capital from impact investors so far. African Clean Energy managed to get loans from partner companies and governments. Rik Ruigrok who tries to lease instead of sell his tables says, *“We’re really scary people for the bank”*. And Philip van Traa of GrownDownTown says, *“You can’t get a loan because the idea is too new and too crazy”*.

Getting a subsidy is also a way to raise capital, however these subsidies are granted under stringent conditions to which the entrepreneur has to comply. Some entrepreneurs are however opposed to getting investors involved. Eric Roosen of Starsock never got capital from investors because according to him, *“An investor wants influence, and wants to make money, if you would look at profit, planet and people, the focus of the investor will be on profit”*. A few entrepreneurs raised capital through crowd funding. Madelon Revermann of Hemel bed describes raising capital this way as, *“Really hard, really hard work, but it worked out in the end”*.

Marketing: The marketing mix is clear from the start for most entrepreneurs, and doesn’t change fundamentally. This coheres with the strategy of the entrepreneurs, they have a mission and a product with which to achieve this mission. There are entrepreneurs who offer sustainable substitutes of already existing products in existing markets. For example African Clean Energy which targets a whole continent with its cook stoves, or Beeboxx which targets all households in the Netherlands with its moving boxes. While others such as Instock or Moyee focus on people who have an ideology similar to theirs. Noticeable is that many entrepreneurs expand the market segment they’re active in, as

more people seem to be interested in their products than initially thought. Guido van Staveren, *“It changes, we get plumbers, roofers, but also lawyers, we don’t know who our target group is”*.

Some entrepreneurs run pilots or experiments before defining whom they’re going to target. Closing the Loop ran a few pilots in different African countries to find out what the best way to target people is. For other companies it’s clear they are operating in a new market. Such as Henry Mentink of Mywheels or Philip van Traa of GrownDownTown who combine existing concepts and create a new market. Philip van Traa, *“Installing vegetable rooftops in cities is really a new market”*. But also in these new markets it is clear from the start whom to target, just by listening to what customers say entrepreneurs adjust their products. Philip van Traa of GrownDownTown listens to what potential customers say, if somebody doesn’t want to buy his products because it’s too big, he develops a smaller one and tries to sell it again.

The ideals of entrepreneurs translate for example into restrictions on margins and making their product affordable. The entrepreneurs of Herso and Hemel Bed, put restrictions on the margins retailers can make on their products, so it stays affordable. Herso lost customers, because of this and Madelon Revermann of Hemel bed says about the funeral service providers, *“For a 15% margin they’re not going to put it in their catalog, they need to really want it”*. The entrepreneurs of Weder instead of restricting business partners try to find new target groups all the time, to sell their products and stories to.

Sustaining Competitive Advantage: Many entrepreneurs who welcome competitors and do not see them as a threat, do have a way to sustain their competitive advantage. Most of them have learning advantages and strategic alliances, there are two entrepreneurs who try to get a competitive advantage by scaling up fast.

In the cases of Herso and GrownDownTown, other entrepreneurs who were focused on making money, tried to copy their ideas. Their products proved to be hard to copy because of the learning process which takes places during the development of the product. Other entrepreneurs have formed unique alliances which provide them with a unique selling point and a competitive advantage. Ludo van de Wiel of Arctic Blue got in touch with guru’s in the field of sustainability who are ambassadors of his product and with the fisherman who supplies his product. Milco Aarts of Soupalicious has a unique contract with the Dutch food banks, for every portion of soup he sells he gives one to the food banks, this gives him a USP as people will feel happy buying his soup. The entrepreneurs of BeeBoxx and African Clean Energy try to gain a competitive advantage by scaling up quickly and establish their brand names. Starsock tries to come up with continuous innovation and Weder comes up with different designs all the time.

4.3 Opportunity identification

Looking at each of these entrepreneurial actions doesn't give a good overview of how these sustainable entrepreneurs have identified their business opportunities. Most companies have entrepreneurial actions in both discovery and creation context and show characteristics of both causation and effectuation. Each company is unique, however some companies tend more towards discovery while other companies tend more towards creation.

Beeboxx and African Clean Energy show a tendency towards discovery and causation. In the case of Beeboxx the business opportunity was simple to see and execute, the entrepreneur had a problem and came across a company that was already solving this problem, and copied them. Ruben Walker of African Clean Energy found a solution in a technology that has been around for more than a century, and applied this in his cook stoves. These entrepreneurs also knew more or less when they started what their company would be going to look like. They did a competitive analysis, looked at the market, at the competition and other possibilities before setting up a company. They wrote a business plan and defined a budget and could say what means they would need to start up the company and whether the business model would be profitable. These entrepreneurs invested their own savings and got money from friends. With this money they went looking for the right means to reach the desired effect and start their business.

On the other hand there are companies which tend more towards creation and effectuation, such as, Herso, Weder and GrownDownTown. These entrepreneurs couldn't copy a business opportunity from another country or industry and the entrepreneur had to develop it gradually himself. For these entrepreneurs it was unclear at the start where they would end up. Philip van Traa describes the process as follows, *"It goes in an innovation flow, you don't know where you have started, you know where you're now but you don't know where you're going to end up"*. To form their idea these entrepreneurs experiment and do pilots and look at how people react to their business ideas. They have to be flexible, when they're getting positive reactions they have to continue, but when they get negative reactions they need to adjust their idea or quit. When they start they can't define what means they need to set up the business. They instead assess which means are available to them, they speak with possible future suppliers and business partners to find out whether they are willing to cooperate with them. The story they tell before even starting the business attracts means in the form of people who share their ideology and offer help. Some of these entrepreneurs don't write business plans, as the world is changing too fast for them, and they would have to adjust their business plan all the time. Others can write a business plan after having run a pilot in which they learn what the best way to run the business is. These entrepreneurs can tell what means they need, after having run a pilot.

The rest of the companies can't be categorized easily as either formed through discovery or creation by looking at their entrepreneurial actions. Looking for characteristics of effectuation or causation

theory doesn't give a clear answer either. Sustainable entrepreneurs seem to have a goal in mind which they want to achieve, causation theory argues that these entrepreneurs will select the right means to reach this goal. However what sustainable entrepreneurs do in practice looks more like effectuation, they assess which means are available to them and try to achieve their goal with these means. Take for example Moyee, the entrepreneur wrote a business plan, knew what he needed to invest and what the returns would be, had the goal to change an existing industry and just had to select the right means to do that, typical signs of causation. On the other hand this entrepreneur didn't have the goal to maximize profits, couldn't get needed capital from external sources, used a pilot to test the reactions of potential customers and formed alliances with his suppliers. This suggests effectuation, the entrepreneur states, *"You know what you need on paper, but once you start putting that into practice, everything changes"*. So he had to change the "textbook" approach he described in his business plan as soon as his business got started, he moved from assessing risk to dealing with uncertainty. Entrepreneurs don't always know how to exactly set up a business, they might have some experience with it, but they still learn through trial and error.

The entrepreneurs who can't be categorized in either discovery or creation don't seem to be different from those who can be categorized, they show the same characteristics which are typical for sustainability-driven entrepreneurs, however because of the combination of entrepreneurial actions they use they can't be easily placed in the model. The reason they give for this is that different types of entrepreneurial actions are more common in different phases of the company. For example most entrepreneurs invest their own money when starting up the company, typically associated with creation theory, when the company is in a later phase the entrepreneurs are more inclined to look for external capital sources which is associated with discovery theory.

5. Conclusion & Discussion

5.1 Conclusion

The literature review in chapter 2 points out that sustainable entrepreneurs make the creation of environmental and societal value their core business. Their products and services are aimed at a mass market and minimize the negative consequences or maximize the positive impact on the environment and society (Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011). Sustainable entrepreneurs come up with end-of-the-pipe, eco-efficient or eco-effective solutions (Carillo-Hermosilla et al., 2010). Eco-effective solutions are the most radical, and involve a change in production process and product design (Braungart et al., 2007; McDonough & Braungart, 2002). Parrish (2010) revealed five principles which sustainability-driven entrepreneurs apply while designing an organization, which are resource perpetuation, benefit stacking, strategic satisficing, qualitative management and worthy contribution.

The extant literature contains discovery and creation views of identifying entrepreneurial opportunities. In the discovery view opportunities exist independent of the entrepreneur, are formed by exogenous forces, and lie waiting to be discovered. In the creation view, opportunities don't exist independent of the entrepreneur and are formed endogenously by the actions of the entrepreneur (Alvarez & Barney, 2007). Through the process of effectuation entrepreneurs can create opportunities by assessing which means are available and what effects can be achieved with these means (Sarasvathy, 2001). In a causation process the entrepreneur has an effect in mind and has to select the right means to reach that effect (Sarasvathy, 2001). Identifying ex post how an opportunity was identified is difficult, to understand in what context an entrepreneur thought he was while identifying the opportunity, one can look at the entrepreneurial actions he took (Alvarez & Barney, 2007).

The data as presented in the results in chapter 4, show that the principles of resource perpetuation described by (Parrish, 2010) are clearly observable in the way sustainable entrepreneurs organize their business. These principles seem to dominate their strategy and decision making. The entrepreneurs have ideals and a mission to have a positive impact, they translate this into a strategy and keep this in mind while making decisions. Although these sustainable entrepreneurs all seem to be characterized by the principles of perpetual reasoning, they identify opportunities in different ways. First of all it indeed proves to be difficult to conclude ex post, whether an opportunity exists independent of the entrepreneur or not. When looking at sustainable entrepreneurs in general one can't say they identify opportunities mainly through discovery or creation. Looking at each of the sustainable entrepreneurs individually some can be categorized as having identified their opportunity through discovery and others through creation, because the entrepreneurial actions they undertook tend to one of these sides. However there is also a number of entrepreneurs who can't be easily categorized and their entrepreneurial actions are a mix of ones that fit in both discovery and creation context. Effectuation and causation theory doesn't give a conclusive answer either. In the discussion section, possible

explanations for the problems with categorizing the identification process of sustainable opportunities are discussed.

5.2 Discussion

Alvarez and Barney (2007) defined a model to distinguish ex post how an entrepreneurial opportunity was identified, however even with their model this remains troublesome. More than half of the opportunities of the interviewed entrepreneurs couldn't be categorized as either been discovered or created. It's thus questionable whether the model which is set up by (Alvarez & Barney, 2007) can be used to find out how sustainable opportunities are identified. The problem that information about an opportunity can always be interpreted as both discovery and creation ex post is persistent in this research. Alvarez and Barney (2007) propose to look at the entrepreneurial actions an entrepreneur takes. From the type of entrepreneurial action one can derive in which context the entrepreneur believes to be operating, (Alvarez & Barney, 2007) assume entrepreneurs will choose entrepreneurial actions that are most effective in the context they're operating in. A few factors might have had effect on the results of this research. In theory the model might provide a good framework to assess whether opportunities are discovered or created. In practice this is however not as straightforward, as entrepreneurs can undertake entrepreneurial actions in both creation and discovery context at once.

The first problem which arose while defining ex post how opportunities were identified, is that respondents tended to focus more on the problems and challenges they're facing at this moment in their business than on actions that took place in the past. To identify whether they created or discovered their business opportunity it's necessary to go back in the past to the phase in which they established their business and this is often troublesome as the entrepreneur can't always remember properly what took place at what time. This makes it difficult to find out which entrepreneurial actions took place at what time and how to interpret the identification of the opportunity.

The model by (Alvarez & Barney, 2007) assumes that entrepreneurs choose effective entrepreneurial actions, because these entrepreneurs make assumptions about whether they're in a risky or an uncertain context. One could state that the entrepreneur of Moyee assumed he was in a risky context because he made a business plan and had a tool to calculate profitability. However he also did a pilot, because it was uncertain whether people would buy his coffee. The model suggests that an entrepreneur has to either discover or create an opportunity, when an opportunity seems to have characteristics of both discovery and creation it can't be placed anywhere in the model. This could mean that ex post the opportunity can be interpreted in two ways, as being discovered or created and looking at entrepreneurial actions is not useful to categorize the opportunity into one of them. However it could also indicate that opportunities can be identified in another way than just discovery or creation, or that a combination of the two is possible.

Another issue with the assumption that entrepreneurs choose the most effective entrepreneurial actions is that they don't always know what's most effective. Many entrepreneurs state that they learn by doing, by trial and error, and that they make decisions based on gut-feeling and the phase of development their company is in. This suggests that entrepreneurs don't know what the most effective entrepreneurial actions are and that they learn by doing what is effective and what not. So choosing an effective entrepreneurial action might depend more on the skills, knowledge and what means the entrepreneur has, than on the context the entrepreneur assumes to be in.

The difference between the creation and discovery context of some entrepreneurial actions seem to be different phases in which the company can be, and it's questionable how useful it is to look at these entrepreneurial actions. For example raising capital, investing your own money or bootstrapping is associated with the creation view. Also entrepreneurs who identified an opportunity through discovery, at the start of their business invest their own money or money from friends, while later on they attract external capital. The same for human resources, when establishing a business either through creation or discovery, at the start it's more common to find people with more general skills in your own network than broadly recruiting for a specific function. Some entrepreneurs stated that these entrepreneurial actions are typical for phases a company can be in, and as you progress as a company you go from own capital to external capital or your own network to a broader network.

The model by (Alvarez & Barney, 2007) is not specifically developed for sustainable entrepreneurs but for entrepreneurs in general. So when an entrepreneur chooses for a type of entrepreneurial action, that might be more based on his own ideals and way of working than on his assumption to be in a risky discovery or uncertain creation context. The interviewed entrepreneurs show clear signs of the principles of resource perpetuation which differ quite a lot from the principles which conventional entrepreneurs use while establishing a business. The way the interviewed sustainable entrepreneurs work might have had an influence on the results, because this is decisive for the entrepreneurial actions they take. These sustainable entrepreneurs are not focused on profit maximization, do not see competitors as a threat, are sometimes opposed to involving external capital and form a magnet and attract people with the right skills. So if an entrepreneur is opposed to involving external capital because he's afraid investors will pressure him to make profits, he'll be automatically in the creation context independent of whether he assumes to have discovered or created an opportunity.

5.3 Limitations & Future Research

The main limitation of this study is the model by (Alvarez & Barney, 2007) which is used to assess ex post how opportunities are identified. The research was done at one point in time and memorizing which actions were taken while the opportunity was being identified, proved to be difficult for the entrepreneurs. Next to that the way of sampling is a limitation, because the sample contains sustainable entrepreneurs who have companies of different sizes and age.

While doing research on opportunity identification one should be aware that ex post opportunities can always be interpreted as either being identified through discovery or creation. The entrepreneurial actions of sustainable entrepreneurs didn't seem to fit in the discovery and creation model by (Alvarez & Barney, 2007), because this model is developed for entrepreneurs in general. To use this model one has to assume entrepreneurs choose entrepreneurial actions which are effective in the context they're in, the qualitative analysis shows that sustainable entrepreneurs don't necessarily choose the most effective entrepreneurial actions. Future research should point out which entrepreneurial actions are typical for sustainable entrepreneurs and how they fit in the risky discovery and uncertain creation context, and how the model can be adapted for sustainable entrepreneurs.

Next to that many opportunities had characteristics of both discovery and creation and could therefore not be categorized as either one of them. Sustainable entrepreneurs of companies which have been established a few years ago or have grown fast in a short amount of time, speak of phases in which they can be in. Some entrepreneurial actions only take place in a certain phase the company is in, as explained in the discussion, entrepreneurs go from internal capital to external capital as their company starts to grow. The difference between internal and external capital is also the difference between creation and discovery context. Future development of the creation and discovery model should determine which entrepreneurial actions are typical in certain phases. Future research should look at how these entrepreneurial actions change with the development of the opportunity, thus how the context the entrepreneur believes to be in changes. Opportunity identification research should also ask the question whether opportunities can be discovered in uncertain contexts.

In this research a sample of sustainable entrepreneurs from different industries was chosen because there were not enough potential respondents in one industry. Although sustainable entrepreneurs from different industries do have similar characteristics in the way they design and run their business, they might not identify business opportunities the same way. This research indicates that there's no single way through which sustainable entrepreneurs identify business opportunities, future research should point out how within an industry, different opportunities are identified.

The differences in size and age of the companies in the research sample adds another limitation, because for entrepreneurs it's not easy to exactly remember a certain point in time and recall what they

did at that moment. The sample in this research contains a company established in 1998 and a company established just this year. For the entrepreneur who established his company this year it's much easier to recall how he identified his opportunity, than for the entrepreneur who established his business almost 20 years ago. Future research should look to minimize the differences in size and age when selecting a sample. The choice for a cross-sectional study is not necessarily a limitation, however entrepreneurs with ideas which are in a similar early phase of development should be selected. Another stream of research could focus on why and how the perception of the entrepreneur on the opportunity sometimes changes when the entrepreneur forms his idea into a business.

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7. Appendices

7.1 Sustainable business model archetypes

Groupings	Technological			Social			Organisational	
	Maximise material and energy efficiency	Create value from waste	Substitute with renewables and natural processes	Deliver functionality rather than ownership	Adopt a stewardship role	Encourage sufficiency	Repurpose for society/environment	Develop scale up solutions
Examples	Low carbon manufacturing/ solutions	Circular economy, closed loop	Move from non-renewable to renewable energy sources	Product-oriented PSS - maintenance, extended warranty	Biodiversity protection	Consumer Education (models); communication and awareness	Not for profit	Collaborative approaches (sourcing, production, lobbying)
	Lean manufacturing	Cradle-2-Cradle	Solar and wind-power based energy innovations	Use oriented PSS- Rental, lease, shared	Consumer care - promote consumer health and well-being	Demand management (including cap & trade)	Hybrid businesses, Social enterprise (for profit)	Incubators and Entrepreneur support models
	Additive manufacturing	Industrial symbiosis	Zero emissions initiative	Result-oriented PSS- Pay per use	Ethical trade (fair trade)	Slow fashion	Alternative ownership: cooperative, mutual, (farmers) collectives	Licensing, Franchising
	De-materialisation (of products/ packaging)	Reuse, recycle, re-manufacture	Blue Economy	Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	Choice editing by retailers	Product longevity	Social and biodiversity regeneration initiatives ('net positive')	Open innovation (platforms)
	Increased functionality (to reduce total number of products required)	Take back management	Biomimicry	Design, Build, Finance, Operate (DBFO)	Radical transparency about environmental/ societal impacts	Premium branding/ limited availability	Base of pyramid solutions	Crowd sourcing/ funding
		Use excess capacity	The Natural Step	Chemical Management Services (CMS)	Resource stewardship	Frugal business	Localisation	"Patient / slow capital" collaborations
		Sharing assets (shared ownership and collaborative consumption)	Slow manufacturing			Responsible product distribution/ promotion	Home based, flexible working	
		Extended producer responsibility	Green chemistry					

Table 9: Sustainable business model archetypes (Bocken, Short & Evans, 2014)

7.2 Interview

The interview has been subdivided into two parts, the first part deals with company information, how the opportunity was identified, what means were needed and whether the company created a new market or not. The second part deals with entrepreneurial actions. The topics are printed in bold.

Part 1: Introductory questions and Opportunity identification (Data Displays 7.4.1 page 54 and 7.4.2 page 60)

Company Information

What does your company do?

Why is your company a sustainable business?

In what way is your company different from non-sustainable companies?

How important is profit for your company?

What role did you play in setting up this company?

Opportunity Identification Process

How did you get the idea to start this company?

When you got the idea to set up a company, did you know exactly what you were going to do? If not, how did you find out what to do?

How did the idea change during the start and growth of the company?

How could somebody else have come to the same idea?

Existing or new market

Did you create a new market in the form of new supply and/or demand?

Means

What did you need to start this company in terms of, money, people, expertise, and office space?

Did you know what you needed when you set-up your company?

How did you find that what you needed?

Part 2: Entrepreneurial action (Data Displays 7.4.3 page 62, 7.4.4 page 67, and 7.4.5 page 72)

Leadership

What is your expertise? And in what way did you use this expertise while leading this company?

How important is this expertise? Where do you use this expertise for?

What's the impact on your credibility as a company if you don't have any expertise in the product you sell?

In what way do you use your charisma?

Decision making

How are important decision made within the company

What do you base your decisions on?

How do you assess the risk of a certain decision?

Human resource practices

Are there other people working for your company? If, so how did they get involved?

How did you select these people? What were the requirements?

Did you focus on people in your own network?

Strategy

What was the strategy or mission of your company at the start?

How complete was that strategy or mission?

How did this strategy or mission change?

Did this strategy or mission change a lot?

Finance

How did you finance your company?

Why did you finance your company in this manner?

Marketing

How do you position your company?

How do you determine who your customers and other stakeholders are?

Did the type of customer your company focuses on change? If so, how?

Sustaining Competitive Advantage

Can other entrepreneurs easily do the same? Why?

What are possible entry barriers for other entrepreneurs?

Did you raise any entry barriers for other entrepreneurs?

7.3 Company profiles

African Clean Energy

Entrepreneur	Ruben Walker
Year Established	2011
Core business	Producing cook stoves
Size	40 employees
Location	Amsterdam & Lesotho
Website	www.africancleanenergy.com

Positive Impact/Purpose

Millions of people cook on open fires inside their houses, the smoke kills around 4 million people worldwide annually. Next to that open fires result in household fires, and the disappearance of forests, the incomplete combustion contributes to global warming. The cook stove can burn any type of biomass safely and has a controlled flame, combustion is complete which results in a minimal amount of greenhouse gases. As an addition, the cook stove can generate electricity which puts people on the grid.

Opportunity identification Process

1. Entrepreneur sees smoke coming out of homes in Africa as the result of cooking on open fire.
 2. Investigates the problem deeper: 4 million people die annually of smoke inhalation and household fires.
 3. Entrepreneur knows a technical solution already exists and has the expertise to form the technical solution into a product.
 4. Market is huge, all people worldwide who cook on open fires, clear demand for such a product.
 5. Cook stove creates win-win situation, good for those who buy it, good for those who sell it.
 6. First looks at competition and ends up developing product with Philips
- Alliance with Philips slow, decides to go to market himself.

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	Engineering background Experience with other start-up	Belief in product necessary
<i>Decision Making</i>	Limited working capital affects decisions	No-brainers
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>	Factory workers in Lesotho Specific accounting skills needed	Family business
<i>Strategy</i>	Bring clean cook stoves to market From selling to only wholesalers to selling to individuals and selling fuel	
<i>Finance</i>	Loans from governments and partner companies (looking for more capital from banks and impact investors)	Crowdfunding
<i>Marketing</i>	All people who run the danger of inhaling smoke while cooking, in Asia and Africa. Experiments with micro-financing and mobile payments	
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>	Huge market Superior product	

Arctic Blue

Entrepreneur	Ludo van de Wiel
Year Established	2015
Core business	Selling sustainable omega 3 fish oil
Size	1 employee
Location	Utrecht
Website	

Positive Impact/Purpose

This fish oil comes from sustainable fisheries and the product is carbon neutral. Next to that fish oil is a healthy addition to the diet of people who don't eat enough fish.

Opportunity identification Process

1. Entrepreneur has intrinsic motivation to only spend time on developing products which have an impact on nature and society.
2. Entrepreneur sees trend towards fair-trade and sustainability in other industries such as coffee, wood and chocolate and is interested in algae cultivation for consumption.
3. Entrepreneur sees problems in algae-based products and thinks sustainable fish oil is the best alternative to algae.
4. Starts business by building product around a MSC (sustainable fisheries) certification.
5. During development of product other sustainability practices added, carbon neutral certification added.
6. Now selling via web stores

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	Has expertise in supply and demand of agricultural commodities in B2B. Lacked knowledge in B2C	Anyone can get this expertise, so charisma is much more important for success
<i>Decision Making</i>		Gut-feeling Based on reactions of people in social network Small scale testing
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>		Specific freelance knowledge from social network
<i>Strategy</i>	B2C sales strategy. Lack of knowledge, learning through trial and error	
<i>Finance</i>	(looking for a loan from a bank)	Own money
<i>Marketing</i>	Marketing mix constant Women who want fish oil as food supplement	
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>		Sustainability guru's as ambassadors of the product Transparency USP through collaboration with fisherman

Beeboxx

Entrepreneur	Peter-Jan Hulsebosch
Year Established	2014
Core business	Leases moving boxes
Size	6 in the office 20 drivers
Location	Amsterdam
Website	www.beeboxx.nl

Positive Impact/Purpose

Cardboard boxes for moving can only be used 2-3 times and then end up as waste. A BeeBoxx is made from recycled plastic and can be used around 400 times, at the end of its life the old Beebox can be shredded and made into a new Beeboxx and is thus Cradle-to-Cradle. BeeBoxx reduces paper waste and the use of natural resources, such as trees and oil, needed to produce cardboard boxes. Next to that their cars are electric and reduce the emission of greenhouse gasses.

Opportunity identification Process

1. Entrepreneur returned to the Netherlands after years of working in Mozambique and was struggling with cardboard boxes to move his belongings.
2. Looked online for an alternative to cardboard boxes and found a company in New York offering plastic moving boxes.
3. Did a competitive analysis, and concluded nobody was doing anything like it in the Netherlands
4. Wrote a business plan and based his business model roughly on the company in New York and started the business.

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	Already set up a hotel in Mozambique and had experience in investment banking so knew well how to set up a business.	A lot of energy, perseverance and flexibility needed No expertise in moving business
<i>Decision Making</i>	When making a decision or doing a pilot it is always important to look at the costs and earnings.	
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>	Drivers and office personnel hired	
<i>Strategy</i>	Make a change in the moving industry and conquer the market quickly.	
<i>Finance</i>	A second round is planned to get more capital	Friends financed the start of the business and got a share of the business
<i>Marketing</i>	Everyone in the Netherlands is a potential customer	
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>	By scaling up quickly Beeboxx wants to build up a reputation and gain a competitive advantage over possible future competitors	There are no competitors, but they are needed to realize the perception customers have of cardboard moving boxes.

Closing the Loop

Entrepreneur	Joost de Kluijver
Year Established	2011
Core business	Recycling and reusing cell phones in Africa and Asia
Size	3 employees in the Netherlands
Location	Amsterdam, Ghana
Website	www.closingtheloop.eu

Positive Impact/Purpose

At the end of their life cell phones in Africa end up on landfills, people work under dire circumstances on these landfills to extract usable materials from e-waste. To extract metal from e-waste, people burn off the plastic away. At the same time, prices of rare metals which are necessary for producing electronics are rising. Closing the loop, tries to make the cell phone industry a circular industry by buying up second hand phones and extracting the rare metals for re-use. A ton of e-waste is much richer in gold than a ton of gold-ore.

Opportunity identification Process

1. Entrepreneur worked in telecom re-use business, sold phones in Africa and Asia. Here he saw that broken phones were dumped and burned.
2. Entrepreneur saw the need to do something with this problem and founded a foundation.
3. After some pilots and talking with other people and companies, the commercial potential became clear.
4. Business was set up next to foundation.

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	First job in telephone re-use sector	Need for charisma based on partner: useful for consumers, less useful for business partners
<i>Decision Making</i>	Decisions based on long run benefit and short run benefit	Gut-feeling Small scale pilots Not enough resources to calculate risk of decision
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>	Entrepreneur knows exactly which knowledge he is missing. Looks for people with certain ideals and specific skills	
<i>Strategy</i>		Move from recycling and re-use company to a company more focused on consulting and advice
<i>Finance</i>		Sponsoring from companies the entrepreneur worked with in his previous job
<i>Marketing</i>	Use of pilots in different countries to test right business proposition. Marketing mix did not change fundamentally	
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>		Entrepreneur developed a link between supply and demand. Existing bigger, business can do a better job, and should therefore step-in Entrepreneur has much more expertise than people he deals with

GrownDownTown

Entrepreneur	Philip van Traa
Year Established	2015
Core business	builds edible rooftops and indoor vegetable gardens
Size	5 employees
Location	Amsterdam
Website	http://www.growndowntown.com/

Positive Impact/Purpose
Worldwide there is a shortage of water and food in cities, products are flown in from all across the world, by using rooftops as gardens, cities can become more sustainable and food can be produced locally. The cooperation builds gardens on rooftops and sells indoor vegetable and herb gardens to restaurants, hotels and soon consumers, this results in a better urban climate and atmosphere.

Opportunity identification Process
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The entrepreneur, a professional gardener, had the idea and goal to make the city greener. He did an experiment with planting vegetables in empty office buildings, it didn't work. 2. He however got very interested in the concept and gave his own gardening company away and started experimenting. 3. The entrepreneur uses a technology used by a partner of his, a nursery garden, on a hotel rooftop. It fails but the hotel is very interested. 4. The entrepreneur sees the potential and continues experimenting with the technology and finds a way that works. 5. After a few years of selling and experimenting with different concepts, including rooftop gardens, he comes to the conclusion he is operating unprofessionally and needs to structure his non-existent business. 6. He gives 3 girls an internship and gives them the task to set up and structure his company

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>		The entrepreneur is good at thinking of new ideas and selling the story, but doesn't have the experience to run a business
<i>Decision Making</i>		Gut-feeling Pilots
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>		Entrepreneur gave three girls, whom he knew an internship.
<i>Strategy</i>	From telling just stories and sporadically a product, to a more structured approach	
<i>Finance</i>		Own money and major business partner who cooperates and finances the development of new products
<i>Marketing</i>	By changing marketing strategy also targeting individuals rather than just businesses	
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>		Learning advantage Entrepreneur wants to cooperate with competitors to spread his ideal

Hemel Bed

Entrepreneur	Madelon Revermann
Year Established	2012
Core business	Making environmentally and society friendly coffins
Size	1 employee
Location	Amersfoort
Website	www.hemel-bed.nl

Positive Impact/Purpose

Regular coffins contain metal, and all sorts of coatings which are harmful to the environment when a coffin is put in the ground or burned. Besides that, funeral service providers control the offer of coffins and make extremely high margins. The Hemel bed coffin is produced in a social workplace and all the materials used in the product are as clean as possible. The entrepreneur tries to create transparency in the existing market.

Opportunity identification Process

1. Entrepreneur got the request from her mother to design a coffin for her.
2. She designed and made the coffin, and incorporated her ideals that this coffin should be clean and environmentally friendly, in her design.
3. When the coffin was done her mother's reaction was very positive and the entrepreneur got the idea to start a social enterprise with the coffin as the central product.
4. Entrepreneur asked social workplace to assemble the parts, and looked for a supplier of wood in Slovakia, started the business.

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	Expertise in design and coaching and therapy	Creating trust and sending positive energy into the world is very important
<i>Decision Making</i>		Decisions based on intuition Doing marketing and going to promotion fairs based on affordable loss
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>		Volunteers from network of friends and family.
<i>Strategy</i>	Sticks to her ideal of creating transparency, however had to be more flexible in margins which funeral service providers can put on her products.	
<i>Finance</i>		Invested savings Crowdfunding
<i>Marketing</i>	Everyone who wants an affordable clean, fair-trade coffin.	
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>		Big funeral service providers have erected barriers for newcomers. Entrepreneur tries to form alliances with other more sustainable initiatives to promote sustainability in funeral sector.

Herso

Entrepreneur	Rik Ruigrok
Year Established	2001
Core business	Making tables from wood scraps
Size	6 employees
Location	Loosbroek
Website	www.herso.nl

Positive Impact/Purpose
Herso makes furniture, mainly tables, from small parts of wood which would otherwise be thrown away and burned. They lease the furniture and thus remain the owners of the wood used in their product. When they get the furniture back after lease they can reuse the materials, and thus have cradle-to-cradle furniture. With their tables they store carbon in wood, they involve people with a distance to the labor market, and students in their production process.

Opportunity identification Process
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business is running bad, entrepreneur gets big contract from major furniture retailer to make tables from scrap-wood. 7 Truckloads of scrap-wood ordered at a window-frame manufacturer. 2. Customers bring back scrap-wood tables because the glue is letting go and they're falling apart. Entrepreneur ends up with great amount of scrap-wood and financial claims. 3. Entrepreneur experiments with different production methods. A glued wooden doll, glued with the same glue as the tables, already has been standing in the office for 3 months without falling apart. 4. Entrepreneur finds out the technique used to glue the wooden doll and applies this in the production process of his tables.

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	Expertise as a table manufacturer	
<i>Decision Making</i>		Gut-feeling Decisions based on pursuing ideals, and affordable loss
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>		Employees need to fit in the way of working. Selection based on gut-feeling
<i>Strategy</i>	In line with entrepreneur's personal ideals Consistent price level due to constant efficiency improvements	
<i>Finance</i>	Loan at the bank for a machine	Own money
<i>Marketing</i>	Clear who customers are, however due to restrictions in margins lost customers Also leases tables instead of selling them	
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>		Other entrepreneurs can't copy idea easily because of learning path

Instock

Entrepreneur	Selma Seddik
Year Established	2014
Core business	Making meals from waste food
Size	30 employees
Location	Amsterdam
Website	www.instock.nl

Positive Impact/Purpose

Instock wants to create awareness and decrease food waste. 1/3 of all the food produced is thrown away or turned into biogas, much of it is still edible but due to supermarket shelf life policies it has to be thrown away. Instock upcycles this waste food into high value restaurant meals and take-away meals. By doing this they try to reduce the amount of food that is thrown away and create awareness on the subject.

Opportunity identification Process

1. The 4 founders of the company worked at Ahold, for the supermarket chain Albert Heijn. They got involved in a contest to reduce food waste.
2. During their traineeships they saw how much good food was thrown away in supermarkets because of shelf life policies.
3. They won the competition with the plan to start a restaurant which serves only waste food from supermarkets.
4. Started as a foundation with a pop-up restaurant.

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	The four founders together, possess the required expertise	Interest in the topic very important. Connections within Ahold important to spread the idea
<i>Decision Making</i>	Need to explain decisions to senior managers Ahold	No-brainer Decisions in line with mission to reduce food waste
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>		People from own social network involved People who share ideals come by themselves
<i>Strategy</i>	Started with an imperfect version of their idea, and gradually improved it by adding a take-away counter and a food truck. Strategy stayed more or less the same	
<i>Finance</i>	Capital from contest Ahold, senior managers give advice	
<i>Marketing</i>	Type of customers more varied than expected, also old people	
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>		Competition unimportant. Working together with other entrepreneurs with the same ideals

Moyee Coffee

Entrepreneur	Guido van Stavereen
Year Established	2013
Core business	Selling Fairchain coffee
Size	12 employees
Location	Amsterdam
Website	www.moyeecoffee.com

Positive Impact/Purpose

Moyee sells coffee according to the Fairchain concept, which means that value is distributed equally among the people in the value chain. The coffee industry is dominated by large multinationals who sell coffee expensively in the west and pay coffee farmers little. So most of the added value ends up in western countries, while coffee producing countries rely on development aid. To make this development aid redundant Moyee wants to roast coffee in the country where it was farmed, in this way more added value will remain in the coffee countries.

Opportunity identification Process

1. Entrepreneur got the request to find a way to finance an art project in Congo with a local project, entrepreneur chose coffee and started investigating the market.
2. The entrepreneur realized he could make the coffee industry fairer and do it profitably, and wrote the fairchain principles (it started as a hobby).
3. Went to Ethiopia and selected farmers to work with and bought their entire harvest at a fair price to prove them he was serious.
4. In the Netherlands the Entrepreneur started a pilot, the one million cup revolution, to see whether he could convince Dutch coffee drinkers of the Fairchain principles.
5. The one million cups were rapidly sold and Dutch coffee drinkers proved to be very interested in the Fairchain principles.

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	Experience in setting up companies	Entrepreneur had no experience of the coffee industry
<i>Decision Making</i>	Entrepreneur had a model from the start to calculate profits and amount of value that would remain in Ethiopia	
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>	After investments, employees hired more specifically on skills	In the beginning people were attracted by the ideology of the company
<i>Strategy</i>	Already clear in business plan, change from premium coffee to mainstream coffee	
<i>Finance</i>	When concept proved to be working, impact investors became invested	In the beginning own investment and investments of friends Big investors were not interested
<i>Marketing</i>	A broader range of people seemed to be interested in Fairchain coffee	
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>		Competitive advantage because of the unique story Wants to create alliances with small coffee producers to compete together against the multinationals

Mywheels

Entrepreneur	Henry Mentink
Year Established	2002
Core business	Provides a platform which facilitates car sharing
Size	Members are employees
Location	Grootebroek
Website	www.mywheels.nl

Positive Impact/Purpose

A car is a big expense for individuals. Cars, on average, stand still 23 hours a day, and most people don't need a big car every day. Through car sharing people can lend their car to other people and thus increase the efficient use of a car. Less cars are needed in urban areas, less cars have to be produced and sold, and car sharing is cheaper than buying a car.

Opportunity identification Process

1. Entrepreneur started in 1993 with car sharing with neighbors.
2. Bovag and Anwb were interested and the entrepreneur got funding to start a foundation to promote the concept of car sharing.
3. In 2002 the funding stopped, car sharing had grown from 1 to 6 cars, and the entrepreneur got the idea to start a business to facilitate car sharing.

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	Started the first professional wereldwinkel (world store), experience as entrepreneur	It's very important how you interact with other people
<i>Decision Making</i>		Uses a completely new business structure, a sociocracy, in which decisions are based on consensus Pilots when no consensus is reached
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>		People interested in car-sharing become members and are customers and employees at the same time
<i>Strategy</i>	To convince people of the sharing economy and that car sharing is an important part of it	
<i>Finance</i>	A family fund invested money as a loan without requiring a share	Early form of crowdfunding amongst members of the company
<i>Marketing</i>	Marketing mix very broad, all people who are interested in car sharing in communities where at least 7-10 people become a member	
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>		Works together with other companies that want to set up a platform for car sharing Competition is not important, spreading car sharing is important

Soupalicious

Entrepreneur	Milco Aarts
Year Established	2014
Core business	Selling soup in a restaurant and B2B catering
Size	6 employees
Location	Amsterdam
Website	www.soupalicious.nl

Positive Impact/Purpose

Soupalicious uses half of its profits to produce soups of waste vegetables in cooperation with food banks. By doing this they try to reduce food waste and reduce the amount of people who live in hunger because of poverty. Next to that they employ people with a distance to the labor market in their restaurant. All soups are affordable and healthy and biological.

Opportunity identification Process

1. Entrepreneur came across some boys from his karate classes, these boys were well educated but couldn't get a job because of their name and background. He got the idea to do something with this
2. At an annual party of the karate school he saw that people from different cultures all brought soup. The entrepreneur got the idea to do something with soup.
3. Entrepreneur wrote an inspirational document and showed it to different parties to see what they would say of the idea.
4. By accident he came across a good place for a restaurant, and started his business there.

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>		Has no experience with soups and the catering industry. Uses the network he built up during his time as a journalist.
<i>Decision Making</i>	Because of investors and subsidies needs to make decisions based on a budget	Does pilots to see whether his ideas work
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>	Wants to hire the best people in the business	Cooks came from own network or were attracted by the ideals of the company
<i>Strategy</i>	Follows the strategy from the inspirational document, however has cut it up in phases, started with the restaurant because he came across it	
<i>Finance</i>	Subsidies by ministry of social affairs and Doen foundation	Own investment Planning to do Crowdfunding
<i>Marketing</i>	Follows marketing mix specified in inspirational document, is however influenced by the opportunity to open a restaurant	
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>		Collaboration with food banks is a USP and this alliance is impossible to copy Through learning builds up an advantage No competitors with same ideals, however welcomes competitors

Starsock

Entrepreneur	Eric Roosen
Year Established	1998
Core business	Selling socks to large European retailers
Size	14 employees
Location	Oisterwijk
Website	www.starsock.nl

Positive Impact/Purpose
Starsock shares value with production workers in China and pays them more reasonable wages. They have a line of socks made with material from old fishnets in a partnership with other companies. The head office is designed to be as environmentally friendly and employee friendly as possible.

Opportunity identification Process
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The only job the entrepreneur could find 17 years ago was being a sock representative. 2. Because he knew a lot about socks he decided to start selling socks from his house. 3. Started his business with a 100 guilders, a bike and a phone.

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	Entrepreneur used his experience as a sock representative. However anyone can learn this	Commercializing a personal ideal or vision into the product makes the product unique.
<i>Decision Making</i>	Decisions made with the help a team of advisors	In beginning based on gut-feeling Always with personal ideals in mind
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>	Advisors with specific qualities hired externally	New people are attracted by the ideals of the company
<i>Strategy</i>	Based on the personal ideals of the entrepreneur. Selling the story of Starsock	
<i>Finance</i>		Own investment
<i>Marketing</i>	It was clear from the start that customers would be large European retailers	
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>	Competitive advantage by having a special product Is continuously looking for new innovations to stay ahead of competition	Gets in touch with the owners of large retailers rather than the lower level purchasers and sells the story of Starsock rather than socks

Weder

Entrepreneur	Caroline Molenaar
Year Established	2014
Core business	Re-designing second hand furniture
Size	2 employees
Location	Harderwijk
Website	www.weder.nu

Positive Impact/Purpose

Suppliers of for example school furniture have an abundant stock of used furniture which still has value. The purpose of Weder is to make sustainable designs which furniture suppliers can use for their used furniture, the supplier will pay for the use of Weder designs. Weder re-designs the non-metal parts of for example chairs and tables and replaces these with bioplastics made from jute and sugar beet waste. For all processes Weder tries to involve handwork schools and social workplaces as much as possible.

Opportunity identification Process

1. The entrepreneur got the question to help a local kringloopwinkel (secondhand store) where people with a handicap or distance to the labor market restore furniture.
2. The entrepreneur asked a friend for help and together they started experimenting with different ways to restore furniture.
3. They went to a fair with a countertop they restored. After the fair they got the reaction that they were making it themselves too easy by just painting over the old countertop.
4. However they also got an order to restore 300 chairs. To find old chairs they contacted a furniture manufacturer which had a lot of useless used chairs. They used the negative feedback for this order.
5. They got the feeling that it was quite special what they were doing and started a company.

Entrepreneurial Action	Discovery context	Creation Context
<i>Leadership</i>	Expertise as a designer	Passion and showing you have passion is important
<i>Decision Making</i>		Decisions mostly depend on the type of order Weder gets When they bought a van it was clear they needed transport, affordable loss
<i>Human Resource Practices</i>		Human capital from own social networks
<i>Strategy</i>	Strategy was unclear at the start and changed because of positive and negative reactions and contingencies	
<i>Finance</i>	Subsidy	Financed from entrepreneur's other business
<i>Marketing</i>		The entrepreneurs are trying to find new find new customers each time Initial kringloopwinkel (secondhand store) customers not interested in their products
<i>Sustaining Competitive Advantages</i>		No competitors. However entrepreneurs would like to see some competitors in the market. Has a competitive advantage because of uniqueness of design and continuously doing new things in terms of design

7.4 Data Displays

7.4.1 Data Display Company Information and Opportunity Identification Process

Respondent	Company Information	Opportunity identification process
<p>African Clean Energy</p> <p>Ruben Walker</p>	<p>We make a biomass cook stove, there is a big problem in developing countries, many people cook on open fire or use bad fuels such as kerosene. This produces a lot of smoke, and this causes around 4 million deaths worldwide.</p> <p>I started the business together with my father, I'm now commercial director.</p> <p>I believe strongly that if a company wants to be successful in reaching social goals, it also needs to be successful financially.</p> <p>We employ around 40 people now.</p>	<p>I saw smoke coming out of houses in Lesotho when people were cooking.</p> <p>When I started investigating I discovered that 4 million people die every year and half the world population has this problem. Then the idea is quickly formed as there is a technical solution. We developed the device ourselves but the technology behind it has been around for a century.</p> <p>Then we looked at the possibilities and ended up at Philips, we cooperated with them. This worked well in the beginning, but after a while we decided to do it ourselves and launched our own product.</p> <p>People are poor but also spend a lot on fuel. So this business model is clear, if you develop a device which lasts for a few years, everyone who buys it will make a profit on that. So the device is good for the finances and health of the households and for the environment.</p> <p>There's an enormous chance and we are able to build a factory to make it.</p> <p>A lot of people get the same idea, a lot of companies try to make cook stoves or solar powered lights. There are other companies who sell more than us, but that could be finished soon. The world really needs it, and I'm glad to be in this industry, I really enjoy it.</p>
<p>Arctic Blue</p> <p>Ludo van de Wiel</p>	<p>We want to bring sustainable fish oil to the market, which is used by people as a food supplement.</p> <p>I only use fish oil which comes from sustainable fishery.</p>	<p>Because I have a background in that industry I know that it's not entirely clean and can use some improvements. That's why I see an opportunity, to provide customers with fair, responsible products, in analogy with coffee, chocolate, and wood. There's a trend in these sectors to be more sustainable. I haven't copied the idea, but I have been inspired by others to become active in this field. I was also inspired by the trend in the algae production.</p> <p>I am intrinsically motivated to only put energy in useful products which have an impact on society, because they're transparent and sustainable and don't use all sorts of resources.</p> <p>If your business case is not calculated well, even with a nice product, you can end up with a loss, or with an unsellable product. So you should approach your sustainable product just like you would a normal product, and calculate the business case.</p> <p>I feel it when I'm on the right way and continue. I haven't calculated everything perfectly, but almost perfectly, that's really important.</p> <p>It started with MSC certified fish oil, looking whether I could get it somewhere, and it soon turned out I could.</p> <p>I'm not a real entrepreneur, that was clear from the start, and then you'll know you won't do everything right.</p>

Respondent	Company Information	Opportunity identification process
Beeboxx Peter-Jan Hulsebosch	<p>Cardboard moving boxes are new when you buy them, although they contain two thirds of recycled paper, one third contains new paper for which trees need to be cut. The production process and transportation requires energy and materials, and you use your moving box one time and then stash it away for 7 years. This can be done easier, sharing economy, moving boxes of 100% recycled plastic, cradle-to-cradle, easier in use and we deliver them and pick them up after use. These boxes lasts 300-400 moving operations.</p> <p>6 people in the office and 20 guys driving through the country in 100% electric buses.</p> <p>Starting Beeboxx went very fast, you just need to have the guts to do it. It's hard work and you have to like it. Every entrepreneur needs to believe in himself and have perseverance, when you fall you have to stand-up. You have to be flexible and be able to adapt. If something doesn't work, stop, and change your course.</p>	<p>I came back from Mozambique and looked for moving boxes. I was messing around with cardboard boxes, and typed into google "boxes", and I found a company who was already doing it, a handy, sustainable, plastic moving box. Then I thought, that's a thing I can do here.</p> <p>I worked out the business model, what the market looked like, and how the earnings model worked. What is demand and supply, price elasticity, what can we ask for a box, transport and still be profitable to start the company. Then I just started.</p> <p>Anyone who had searched for moving boxes on google could have come to the same idea.</p> <p>Entrepreneurship is doing. With this sort of concept which involves a behavioral change you can work out your business plan. I did by the way, earnings model, competitors, risks, and can we convince customers that we have a good product and this is the new way of moving.</p> <p>In the first phase you benchmark, you look at what there already is on the market and you quickly find out it isn't there yet. Because I copied these companies from the US you can look at how they work, everyone is online nowadays. I applied their earnings model on the local market here. If you do a market analysis then you can quickly find out where they offer these products.</p>
Closing The Loop Joost de Kluijver	<p>We collect mobile phones with the purpose to stretch the life cycle of mobile phones as long as possible. The wider purpose is to make the telecom sector more sustainable.</p> <p>We buy phones in Africa and Asia which people would otherwise throw away, dump or burn.</p> <p>Our partners in Europe get the metals out. Next to that we have a proposition in Europe which focuses on re-use.</p> <p>I'm the only full-time employee, there are 3 people working for the company in the Netherlands.</p> <p>The real work happens in the developing countries. There's one local business partner per country who is responsible for collecting mobile phones.</p>	<p>Re-use of phones already exists for around 15 years in Europe, I also started in that industry. But recycling, and specifically recycling in Asia and Africa isn't happening at all. Our focus is there because there are growth opportunities there, the societal challenge is there and my personal interest lies there.</p> <p>Because I bought phones here and sold them for re-use in Africa and Asia I saw and heard what happened to useless, broken phones. That was something I didn't know, but immediately saw the necessity and need to do something about it. Then I thought, maybe there's something to do there for us.</p> <p>Over time, after having spoken with a lot of parties, and having done a few pilots, we noticed there was a commercial potential. That's why I set up a company next to the foundation.</p> <p>There will have been other people who saw the opportunity but they didn't do anything with it.</p> <p>Our approach was doing pilots, to find out what works and what is needed. Based on that we wrote a business plan, and also used the information to learn about this topic.</p>
GrownDown Town Philip van Traa	<p>We are a cooperative and building a company.</p> <p>We install edible roofs and walls in for example restaurants. We have a concept named teatable on</p>	<p>We started 5 years ago, and tried to grow vegetables in empty office buildings. It didn't work out but I couldn't let go of the idea. I had a gardening company and gave it away to pursue my own mission, I said this has to happen.</p>

Respondent	Company Information	Opportunity identification process
	<p>which you can grow your own tea. We cooperate with plant nurseries. We deliver our concepts and after use we look how we can recycle or reuse the components or put in new plants.</p> <p>We're continually looking for solutions to make the city greener and get more vegetables in the city. We're also working on a concept to store water in the city. We think of new concepts all the time.</p> <p>I'm on a mission and that's not to see how much there is on my bank account every morning. On the other hand we know we need money, so it's good to have a structure so money goes in and out more gradually.</p>	<p>We have failed so many times, we now have a whole network of partners with which we cooperate.</p> <p>Growing organically. You simply see a solution. A partner showed us a tray to grown plants on. I tried it on top of a hotel, everybody said it was impossible, I tried it, it didn't work properly, but people got enthusiastic so we were in the right place.</p> <p>So I improved the system and tried it on another rooftop, this time it worked. With that system I developed teatable and just like that in one and a half year it goes in an innovation flow, you don't know where you have started, you know where you're now but you don't know where you're going to end up. It just happens, it's a rollercoaster. Everything is already invented, you just have to recombine it.</p> <p>If you want to continue your mission, people have to take you seriously. I was working on my 40th birthday, I was fed up and said to myself this must stop. And there you see, a week later comes a phone call from this girl for an internship. We notice all the time, If we take decisions today, things happen tomorrow.</p> <p>Now we have the goal, we need to establish a company and that's finally taking form. It's trial and error. Not a surprise when you let 3 girls do an internship and build your company. The best school is learning by doing.</p> <p>I have failed a lot of times but my feeling tells me this time it's going to work. Now the concept is consistent people start to trust it and want to try it. Five star hotels call us, if we would be a one day fly they wouldn't even call us.</p>
Hemel Bed Madelon Revermann	<p>My company is named Hemel bed (heaven bed), I offer ecological products for beauty and consolation which have a relation with funerals and commemoration. I make these together with the social workshop in Amersfoort.</p> <p>Ecology has to do with that my products are as clean as possible, I go far in that in comparison to others, I always use A-quality wood.</p> <p>I use good biological fair trade cotton and kapok and the handles are made of naturally tanned leather which doesn't contain chrome. I don't know whether children were involved in the cultivation process but I ask about that every time I order, but my supplier can't give me an answer on that. So my products are very clean for the earth and also for cremations.</p>	<p>I have a company in design, coaching and therapy since 1988. Hemel bed has its origins in my mother's request to design a coffin for her. I did that, and when she saw it, she really liked it, and the beauty and consolation the coffin gave struck me. Within seconds I thought, this is so important, much more than any other thing I every designed. I'm going to do this as a social enterprise. That was not a question, it was just the path I would follow.</p> <p>I have put extreme requirements on my products. In advance I know that I'm going to reach these requirements, but I don't know how, but I simply know I'll reach them. Quality always comes on the first place, before time. There is no factor to stop me and to be satisfied with a solution of lower quality.</p> <p>I didn't know it was going to be named Hemel Bed. I didn't call it a prototype because it was just my mother's coffin.</p>
Herso Rik Ruigrok	<p>We make tables from waste.</p>	<p>A big mistake with buying supplies resulted in these tables. In the slipstream of a big success we worked together with a furniture retailer to make tables from scrap wood from a window frame manufacturer. When I bought seven containers of scrap wood, the first tables started coming back because the glue was letting go and they were falling apart and I ended up with a huge financial claim.</p>

Respondent	Company Information	Opportunity identification process
	<p>You can re-use wood endlessly. We show that, and we want to stop burning wood. So that's what we do, preserving wood.</p> <p>We already had the idea to lease our tables. This means that they will be coming back in a few years, and we know what's in them. We can anticipate that, and our way of working now will affect how we regenerate the materials in ten years.</p>	<p>We had no choice, I had to get rid of it, so I started experimenting with the supply of my father in law combined with that of the window frames. I had the name No Waste, I got back a 100% of what I sold, so my staff was calling it waste of time.</p> <p>At a certain point an employee made a glued wooden doll which stood in a corner for 3 months and didn't fall apart. Then we inspected the doll and found out how we could properly glue these tables.</p> <p>It's an evolutionary process. There's an eruption, you start running for the lava, you don't know how far the lava gets and whether there'll be rocks falling out of the sky, you just start running and see where your legs will bring you. No week is the same here.</p> <p>If you look with an open mind to problems you can solve them.</p> <p>Making the world more beautiful. More beautiful than when I got here 15 years ago, I have had that desire all my life.</p>
<p>Instock Selma Seddik</p>	<p>Instock creates awareness around food waste. We have a pop-up restaurant in which we cook with products which would have been thrown away in the supermarket. We now also have a take-away restaurant and a food truck.</p> <p>We try to reduce food waste in two ways. One by actively reducing food waste, two by creating awareness.</p> <p>We have 30 people working for us now.</p>	<p>We won a contest for the best solution to decrease food waste. We came up with a plan to use food, which would have been thrown away, in a restaurant. At that time we didn't know whether there would be enough food, if it was possible to have a supply driven offer, whether people would like it and would come to the restaurant, that's why we started as a pop-up. We always had the idea in the back of our head to open a real restaurant if all things would work out, and that's what we're going to do in June.</p> <p>We were trainees at Ahold and had seen what was being thrown away in supermarkets every day, that becomes biogas, but if you think of it, you can upcycle it and give it a lot more value. Then at a party we just said, let's join the contest with our plan.</p> <p>When we like something it's not that we do a market analysis and select a target group, no it's more that we rather take the opportunity enthusiastically.</p> <p>The world changes so fast, at the moment you finish your plan, it has already changed. Our pop-up restaurant is just like what, app developers do, they come up with an imperfect 1.0 version and improve it. That's what we do offline</p>
<p>Moyee Coffee Guido van Staveren</p>	<p>We create value closer to the source, more money stays behind in the place where coffee comes from. If more money stays behind, development aid will no longer be necessary.</p> <p>We're setting up a professional coffee roaster in Ethiopia, where now 99,9% of the coffee beans leave the country unroasted. Roasting the beans adds three to seven times more value.</p>	<p>Moyee has been established as a purpose company, to change something in the coffee chain. We didn't start to sell coffee, just to sell coffee, we're an A-typical company, and want to change the coffee industry.</p> <p>It's a discovery, I didn't know the coffee industry worked like this. I actually rolled into it, because Renzo Martens of the Institute of Human Activities asked me to look for a source of income for a project on a plantation in Congo. I chose coffee, with the idea put a brand on it and sell it. When I started studying the coffee industry I was astonished.</p>

Respondent	Company Information	Opportunity identification process
	<p>A.I the certificates, fair-trade, rainforest alliance, Utz, all with a good purpose but adopted by what I call big coffee (multinationals). They keep us away from the real issues.</p>	<p>When I saw we could really do something, change something in a profitable way, I thought let's just try it. It started as a hobby project, but soon I saw it could become serious and then you start getting ambitious, your ego gets involved and you go for it.</p> <p>First I defined the fairchain principles and tested them through the 'one-million cup' revolution. I thought if I can sell one million cups and convince people that the coffee chain isn't right and there's an alternative, that's sort of a proof of concept.</p> <p>From Congo I went to Ethiopia, the birthplace of coffee. There I selected farmers to cooperate with, we helped them improve their harvest and grow quality coffee. Then I bought the whole harvest, 25.000 kilo, without having a customer, just to show these farmers I was serious. Then I set up a team here to make the coffee and start the one-million cup revolution.</p> <p>First I tested the concept with family and friends, but the one million cup revolution was the most important.</p> <p>The idea is so simple that it's strange nobody thought of it before.</p>
<p>Mywheels Henry Mentink</p>	<p>We have cars for car sharing, that's what we do, and that's what I started with one day.</p>	<p>I started in 1993 with the first car between 3 families, always with the idea that we could add more cars. By coincidence I got in touch with the ministry of transport, they were working with Bovag and Anwb on something similar. I said I'm doing it already, they liked it and they invited me for a conference about how to organize and approach car sharing. I there got the task to start a foundation for the promotion of car sharing.</p> <p>That took 10 years, paid with subsidies of the ministry of transport, but those ran out. In 2002 the one car I started with had become 6, it was just a thing I did next to my job, not to make money. Then I thought I'm going to start a business with this, and that's how it started.</p> <p>I just wanted to do something with my ideals and that's not possible within a company, so I thought, I'll start for myself, I quit my job in 1999 and stepped into my own world so to say.</p>
<p>Starsock Eric Roosen</p>	<p>In 2020 we want to be the best sock company in Europe. That means that if people talk about something special in 2020, they'll talk about Starsock. We build on innovation and sustainability, so we're constantly thinking how we can do things better, faster and nicer, always with sustainability in mind.</p> <p>We sell to big European retailers and buy in China, Portugal or Turkey, that's our core business.</p> <p>Sustainability is people, planet and profit. Profit is no discussion, we are a company and have to make profit. Planet, we try to do everything better than other companies. This building is already special, sustainable. People work part-time here, because I think</p>	<p>I was unemployed 17 years ago, I had been a sock representative, so I started a sock company. I wanted to start something for myself and I had the most expertise in socks. The sustainability aspect came later on, and I made a lot of mistakes because as an entrepreneur you can only do 2 or 3 things at the same time. Sustainability is a choice.</p> <p>When you start something it's never clear, you need to have a clear vision of where you want to go to. But how you fill in that vision is unclear, it's a constant process.</p> <p>I started from my attic, went to my customers by bike, went by train and borrowed somebody's phone to make phone calls. I built it up slowly, because I was confident of where I would end up. You can start real easy. Everyone can start a business in his attic with a computer and a telephone.</p> <p>I had nothing in the beginning, a bike and a 100 guilders, that's what I started with. In that phase a 100 guilders was important, now 1 million.</p>

Respondent	Company Information	Opportunity identification process
	<p>there are more important things than work in life. We work with 14 people here and we try to explain our way of working abroad.</p> <p>When I die, the world should be more beautiful than when I got here.</p>	<p>I learned by trial and error, made a 100.000 mistakes but 100.001 things right.</p>
<p>Souपालicious</p> <p>Milco Aarts</p>	<p>We make and sell soup, business to business and in a restaurant. In the restaurant we also sell salads, sandwiches, and alcohol, we organize parties and we educate people there.</p> <p>We put half of our profit into a second soup line, Souprise. We make this out of waste food vegetables and we give this for free to food banks.</p> <p>We're at war with food waste and hunger because of poverty.</p> <p>The goal is to supply the whole of the Netherlands within three years with at least one package every week for every customer of the food bank, in a package of one liter of frozen soup.</p> <p>The other part is that we work with a small consistent team and a large flexible team with people with a distance to the labor market.</p> <p>These companies are hybrid, they're not looking for profit maximization, but do want to make a profit</p>	<p>I invented it and put it into the world with my companion Frank Kessel.</p> <p>It's an experience, we're really close to our inspirational document. You try to win over souls, you're a missionary. It's still the same in terms of ambiance and goals, but you cut it up in phases, you can't do everything at once. In that plan we also said we would do a restaurant, but not straight away.</p> <p>Then I see something like that and I think I have to give them a call, that's how things go. Synchronicity, coincidence, chance in your business plan, that's what we do.</p> <p>When there are chances you can continue or turn into new paths, but the main thing is that we want to set up a very beautiful inclusive company.</p> <p>Two boys that I knew couldn't get jobs because one of them was named Ali and the other came from a notorious neighborhood. At our school there was always a party at which everybody brought their own food, many people came with soup. I thought, that's interesting, maybe I have to do something with soup. I looked at the different cultures and saw they had one thing in common, immigrants have less money and bigger families, more hungry stomachs, that's soup. Then I thought yes it's going to be soup. I thought I'll get all the soup recipes through a soup challenge. I thought were going to sell it, we're going to make it a social enterprise.</p> <p>So then you go to different parties who might be interested, that's just a test.</p>
<p>Weder</p> <p>Caroline Molenaar</p>	<p>Weder is a two man company and we're designers. We try to, hard to say, we try to let manufacturers take their responsibility for their own products, waste products. We want to give them the tools to give these waste products a new life. So that they take back what they produced and transform it into a new product for a value the same or higher than the original product.</p> <p>We always look if there's a school who can help us, or a social workshop. We work with an upholsterer, we always use sustainable materials, but we search for certain people to apply them. Now we work with people with a visual handicap.</p>	<p>The Inclusief group here in Harderwijk is a social workshop and has kringloopwinkels. They called me and said Caroline you designed our office once, we have a problem one of our kringloopwinkels isn't going well, can you help us? I found it funny at the start but then you think "help" how do I get rid of this task.</p> <p>I didn't know where to start, we started thinking about where there's still value and when something still has value.</p> <p>We first thought of a way for the people of the social workshop to renovate the furniture for the kringloopwinkel. So we started with sand blasting. Then we thought of painting and we developed a paint with Wijzonol. We went to a fair where Forbo said, nice job, we were standing there with a renovated countertop. After that we saw a message on Facebook which said, Weder, easy, just paint it over and finished. At that moment we thought, ok, this is a lesson of how it shouldn't be done. We however also got an order via that fair for 300 chairs and then the ball started rolling. We went looking for a manufacturer which had that many chairs.</p>

Respondent	Company Information	Opportunity identification process
		<p>So it all started with the request of the kringloopwinkel.</p> <p>We started with the three of us. Esther was involved back then and she did marketing and design and she had her own company. She was very sensitive for the market and said we had something very good in our hands.</p>

7.4.2 Data Display Market and Means

Respondent	Existing or new market	Means
<p>African Clean Energy</p> <p>Ruben Walker</p>	<p>You create a sort of new market, people in Africa already buy cook stoves, but a smoke free cook stove which provides people with electricity and light and puts them on the grid makes a huge difference, and nobody does that yet.</p>	<p>I could be anywhere, I don't need a lot of office space.</p>
<p>Arctic Blue</p> <p>Ludo van de Wiel</p>	<p>I know there're omega 3 algae oil products, these are the most sustainable, premium alternatives. But algae oil proved to be difficult, so I decided to come with sustainable fish oil, a product between algae oil and normal fish oil.</p>	<p>You need to make a budget and include unforeseen costs. You need to take everything into account.</p> <p>I won't bring the product in a professional way to the market, like Unilever, which has a lot of capital and means to test the product, for me it's a big guess. Maybe the product won't exist anymore in 2 years.</p>
<p>Beeboxx</p> <p>Peter-Jan Hulsebosch</p>	<p>The market is big, 1.3 million people who moved last years, not even speaking about businesses and government who have to be more sustainable. We have become a sustainable choice for semi-government companies.</p> <p>Our product is simpler, stronger and easier in use, so in that sense you break open the market, it's an innovation of an existing product.</p> <p>An entrepreneur believes in his own product. If it's something completely new like an ipad, you have to create demand yourself. So you must offer something innovative, so that people think wow that's a nice product.</p>	<p>I just started, with a small office, 1000 boxes and a driver, bought a van, built a website and then we went live.</p> <p>You know if you have 50000 euro's, you can buy a 1000 boxes, build a website, hire an office, buy a van and build up your company. You have to have a company identity. Before you have income, you have a lot of expenses, so you also need a buffer. So you know what you need and go to a few friends and say who wants to join.</p> <p>The costs to start aren't that high anymore. You can calculate really fast and easy what it's going to cost to start. If you don't give yourself a salary.</p>
<p>Closing The Loop</p> <p>Joost de Kluijver</p>	<p>I tried to build a bridge between supply and demand, and this seems to work quite well.</p> <p>I knew you can recycle a mobile phone quite well, and that we can do that in Europe.</p>	<p>That's old economy thinking, it doesn't fit with this business idea, and if you want to exactly calculate in advance what you need you'll never start because that information is hard to get.</p> <p>It was not known, but it also wasn't the risk. Only a few small investments were needed for the small scale projects we did at the start.</p>
<p>GrownDown Town</p> <p>Philip van Traa</p>	<p>Installing vegetable rooftops in cities is really a new market.</p> <p>Making cities more sustainable is essential. We have a solution, so a hype becomes a trend and become normal. It can become good business.</p>	<p>No in terms of equipment I didn't know what I needed. But in terms of business skills I already know all my life what skills I don't have.</p>

Respondent	Existing or new market	Means
Hemel Bed Madelon Revermann	People still don't know it can be done differently, that's because my product is not in the catalogs and if it is I don't know whether they show it to people.	The first thing I did was going to the social workshop and talk. To ask whether they liked the product, I couldn't give them any guarantees, I told them my plan and asked them to join. They liked it and then I went looking for a supplier of wood. Through a friend I found a supplier in Slovakia.
Herso Rik Ruigrok		No, you don't know. You encounter a problem which has to be solved. You solve this problem and just have to continue stubbornly. I noticed that when people laugh at me, I'm on the right track. We're a table manufacturer so the choice for equipment is based on that.
Instock Selma Seddik	If the food prices will rise other companies will start doing the same. It's not a trend, people are just looking more and more how they can act in a circular way.	We made an extensive business plan for the contest and we thought of everything.
Moyee Coffee Guido van Staveren	Coffee is coffee, everybody is our competition, but at the same time there's nobody doing it the way we do, so there's no competition. However we are selling coffee, but coffee with a story, with a sustainability aspect. But because of our fair chain principles we're unique and don't have competitors. The substitute is clear, it's our coffee or theirs.	You know what you need on paper, but once you start putting that into practice, everything changes. As an entrepreneur you then have to come up with solutions.
Mywheels Henry Mentink	The business model and the product are both new.	I had a different philosophy of setting up businesses. It's a process of speaking and searching, it's not the traditional way of writing a business plan, going to the bank, receiving money, being a success or going bankrupt. What I do is imitating nature. A tree doesn't grow in one day, you have a seed, later on a few leaves, that's just how it went with Mywheels.
Starsock Eric Roosen	It is something completely new and it is a strategic choice to be able to tell the sustainability message with the least interesting product, socks. So when customers buy from us, they don't buy just the product socks, they don't buy socks as a product, but they buy the story. Because of that story, new demand has been created. The owner of Lidl said, I want those socks, not because he wanted socks, but because he wanted to build something special with Starsock.	Those are the easy ones, when you write your business plan, you can just fill it in and say how much you need. The hard thing as a young entrepreneur is to stick to your belief.
Souपालicious Milco Aarts	I don't create a new market, it's already there but not very visible, I just try to make it bigger.	I want to make profit too, I invested a lot so I want to see that back one day. You always make a business case but the bigger and more unfeasible you make it, if you put down your dream in numbers. You have to cut it all in pieces. You have to look per location, what do I need, which equipment, space, and that's how I cut it up. I make an investment and exploitation budget.

Respondent	Existing or new market	Means
Weder Caroline Molenaar	If something has value it deserves another life. If you add value to something by restoring it, you make a new product and people start to take up the idea.	<p>We notice every time that you just have to do it, something comes on your path, and that's how it evolves, by contingencies that come up, for example with the bioplastics, we got a phone call from an architect who saw us at the fair. We also went to a bio-based symposium where we met Dirk who said, I'm going to look how you do it all.</p> <p>Later on we found somebody who could make the bioplastic for us, so that's how it develops, by coincidence.</p> <p>At a certain point people come to us, they know where we are. But you have to get your things together, build a website. Esther built ours, for free. My sister did the application for a subsidy and Hans's wife made the photographs.</p>

7.4.3 Data Display Entrepreneurial Action 1

Respondent	Leadership	Decision Making	Human Resource Practices
African Clean Energy Ruben Walker	<p>We were lucky we had the technical knowledge, we are both engineers.</p> <p>I established a business in 2009 in the Netherlands, selling bamboo floors.</p> <p>You learn a lot by doing. I am rather impulsive, and it's good to look from someone else's perspective to how you act, where you need to slow down a bit and where not.</p> <p>I am convinced of this product, a 100%, I really believe in my product. People notice that. It is easier to sell a product if you really believe in your product.</p> <p>The drive, you need both expertise and charisma. The problem is you have a lot of people that want to do something good in Africa but just mess around.</p>	<p>Do you add a Led light or not? That's a no-brainer, most people don't have electricity and then for a few dollars they do.</p> <p>Some things you need to calculate really well. We for example have a shortage of working capital and have to be really careful not to buy too many components and end up without money.</p>	<p>For a supervisor and factory workers. There's such a high unemployment rate in Lesotho, if you have 10 vacancies today, tomorrow there'll be a 1000 people to apply.</p> <p>Accounting was a bit more difficult, we really had to do interviews. The level of accounting in Lesotho is very low, but for factory workers it was really simple.</p>
Arctic Blue Ludo van de Wiel	<p>I have a good overview of the supply of resources, I have been active as a salesman of B2B agricultural products.</p> <p>If you don't have it in you, or you don't learn it quick enough, entrepreneurship has to be your thing, otherwise it will not work out for you. Charisma is more important, a lot of other people have the technical experience, and you can hire it. But charisma is more passion.</p>	<p>Gut-feeling.</p> <p>That's not my thing as a start-up, I can't invest in that, it's all a question of feeling, all feeling. If my female target group says I have to change my design I'll change it.</p>	<p>I have no personnel, I'm responsible for everything.</p> <p>Yes those are specific people I hire freelance. People I know and who I can hire at a low cost.</p> <p>Those are neighbors, friends. I have a freelance designer and website designer and a legal advisor.</p>

Respondent	Leadership	Decision Making	Human Resource Practices
		It is all feeling, gut-feeling, trial and error, tested on a small scale, uncertain what the result will be.	
Beeboxx Peter-Jan Hulsebosch	I come from the financial sector and I have build up and managed a hotel in Mozambique. I was active in investment banking, so I knew what is needed to start a company. However entrepreneurship is having energy, enthusiasm, and belief, in that what you put on the market. Those are the core values together with the right vision, persuasiveness and perseverance. Compared to the hotel in Mozambique, this was peanuts. If you have a good idea which isn't here yet, it's really easy to find that out without knowledge of a specific market.	From an investors perspective you always look at your return on investment. If I hire a sales manager I know what his salary is and what he has to do. So you hotbox a certain marketing or sales concept and see whether it works out or not. You let up different balloons, google optimizes that and you can see which ones are best visited and see what happens. I can spend money on a market research but there is no market.	One person can't do everything. So I hired people for the operational tasks. It became clear really quick that I needed a driver that was easy. But operationally I needed marketing knowledge, first you let a company do it for you and later on you hire.
Closing The Loop Joost de Kluijver	I had my first job in the telecom sector. I think it really helped that we already had a network. My network there to sell phones was also useful the other way round, to buy phones. People have to believe in it. It's not a cold model or concept which already has proved to work, it is relatively new and it's important that people think that the problem you solve should be solve. So you need to communicate that in the right way. In most cases I know much more than my public about this topic. Companies and governments I deal with, focus more on the data and cold side of the story. So for them it's important that you know your numbers well. While for consumers it's the other story, for them your image is more important than what you really do.	Those pilots had the goal to test different methods. We worked together with different parties, individuals, companies, foundations, NGO's in Africa, scrapdealers, and that information we used to come to one approach we use now in Ghana. Gut feeling mainly. I don't have the time and resources to justify all that rationally, it's all gut feeling. If you make a decision on a micro scale, you look whether that fits in the macro image. And whether it works in the long run as well.	Now I'm looking for two new employees. I look for specific qualities, because I know what I can't do myself. And I know what we want to achieve with the organization, so I look for a certain type of person. I certainly look for specific skills. Communication and marketing.
GrownDown Town Philip van Traa	I'm not a businessman and there're a few people around me who say let's do this differently otherwise you will later be able to look back on a noble life without money. I can't build the company, and if I can't, somebody else has to do it.	Gut-feeling, all feeling. A rational thinking with the feeling this has to happen now. You can consider all the pros and cons and speak with experts, no it's just feeling.	A girl from a school in Amsterdam whom I knew from another project asked me for an internship at my company. I told her, this company consist of one man. I told her if you want an internship you have to get the other girls from the project, you three are going to

Respondent	Leadership	Decision Making	Human Resource Practices
	<p>I had a gardening company with a lot of skilled people, I came up with ideas and designs and knew that I couldn't make any of it myself.</p> <p>Telling the story is of great importance, but if you don't show a product, the whole story is in vain. So I have a team that organizes the business, while I tell the story. People can look at the pictures on our website and then think he tells a story and even makes it come true.</p>	<p>Learning from the mistakes you make, not a business model, but it is where we are going to, making a sort of forecast because my partners are asking this.</p>	<p>build my company. That was the biggest guess of my life, but it seems to have been a good one.</p>
Hemel Bed Madelon Revermann	<p>Trust is not only in words, also in the things you do, show and how you do them.</p> <p>I notice it's from person to person, everyone has a heart which can be reached in some sort of way, so that's what I do.</p> <p>My goal is that I send good things, positive things into the world.</p> <p>It's a way of living, of thinking, feeling and self-consciousness. I have an optimistic character, and that helps.</p> <p>I like to be direct, honest, and tell the truth. That's the guarantee I can give people, and I take them with me in uncertainty because I can't give them certainty. That also opens your heart, because when people are open and honest you are more inclined to say yes I'll go with you in this uncertainty.</p>	<p>The funeral fairs in which I participate, they can be organized by funeral service companies, I they're too expensive I don't go.</p> <p>I thought now I have to do crowdfunding, I need to order new wood, make a new design for people who don't fit in the normal coffins. I just needed new money. My niece sent me an email and said you have to look at doorgaan.nl. I didn't even look at the other platforms, I just thought, this might be a good thing to do.</p> <p>From intuition, from influencing naturally, I think people have a lot in common, we're not all individuals. For example beauty and consolation, everybody knows music, that's universal. I use that universal feeling in making decisions, and I go a bit with the flow. If I would have a lot of money, I would make a rational plan and I would be able to make larger steps.</p> <p>Now I do it on a smaller scale, for example via facebook, which doesn't involve high costs, fairs which are not too expensive.</p>	<p>I have volunteers who help me on fairs, because that's too much work for me alone. I need to build up a stand and in the meanwhile speak with people and those conversations can last quite long. So I always take somebody with me.</p> <p>Those are all friend and family, but I'm careful with them, I don't ask them all the time.</p> <p>Some of them I don't even ask. It's not that I ask them because I know them, they do need to have a certain comfort to speak about this topic, Hemel bed and its philosophy on fairs.</p>
Herso Rik Ruigrok		<p>I chose to lease tables to Souपालicious because I liked their ideals and these are very similar to ours. So that's why I agreed.</p> <p>That machine was a waste of money, if you spend a 100.000 euros you have one too. What we do with our hands that's what Herso is, everybody can buy that machine and use it.</p>	<p>We need a special type of employee, one that's flexible and can change course when something doesn't go as planned, and can repair and solve problems. We lost a lot of good employees because they didn't fit in our system.</p> <p>Henk came here because he got fired in a business on the other side of town. He came here, I saw him and</p>

Respondent	Leadership	Decision Making	Human Resource Practices
		<p>I sold my van because it was old and they paid a lot for it in Ukraine, so I didn't have to write off anything. I needed a van, I knew a colleague who was not doing well financially so I agreed with him I could hire his van whenever I need it.</p> <p>Gut-feeling, feeling is more important. For some people the road towards the goal is more important than the goal itself. But I don't care if I have to pay 7, 11 or 12% interest, if I want to do something I do it.</p>	<p>hired him without even looking at his record. He told me he was good at transporting pigs. I just look at someone and know whether he's the right guy or not.</p>
<p>Instock Selma Seddik</p>	<p>We started with the four of us, we do everything together but have divided certain tasks, I'm in charge of the finances, Bart does operational tasks, Freek does communication and Merel does HR and a bit interior design. Bart is the only one with expertise in the food service industry, for the rest of us it was all knew, we just did it because we thought we had to do it.</p> <p>We spoke to a lot of people within Ahold before starting, this resulted in a lot of goodwill among the people, which has certainly helped us.</p> <p>You need to like it, you need to be convinced that you need to change something. Starting up a normal restaurant is already hard, if you then do it like us, supply driven, it becomes even harder.</p>	<p>We work with a mission, vision and strategy, and within this strategy there are certain goals we want to achieve, so we do that in a business manner. We make decisions together, when that doesn't work out the one who's in charge of that topic takes the final decision. We're not like a big company, we all have a single goal.</p> <p>The decision to move in June was a no-brainer. our restaurant was in all newspapers and it is running good.</p> <p>We have been asked for the Expo in Milan. We spend quite a while figuring out whether to go there. But that's not our strategy so we said no.</p>	<p>We had a lot of help from friends while setting up the restaurant. People from the "wide family", the Youth Food Movement helped us a lot.</p> <p>It was hard to find a good chef, because you need a creative chef who's also good at managing. So we found a chef who's still studying, she can only work on the weekends so we only open on these days.</p> <p>Everyone who works here has the philosophy that things can be done differently. A lot of people are attracted to our restaurant, but not always the most experienced people. Mostly people from the Youth Food Movement, who are idealistic. You need to have some experience or expertise, you can like doing something against food waste but if you can't carry three plates we won't hire you as a waiter.</p>
<p>Moyee Coffee Guido van Staveren</p>	<p>I didn't know anything about the coffee industry, I just had experience in setting up other businesses.</p> <p>The idea is great, but it's all in the execution, doing it.</p>	<p>Just like a normal company, it has to work.</p> <p>I calculated everything from the start. I had an excel sheet for sales, supplies and the added value that would stay behind. I started calculating. It's a business case, making a business plan.</p>	<p>We set up a team of people who could create a storyline and then start with guerrilla actions. Partly from my own network, this was all on my own selection but once you go live people will come to you.</p> <p>At the start I was short on cash and a lot of people came to us because of our ideology. Now we're in a transition where you can see that the business model works and serious financing is coming in, we'll have to start hiring people who can really do something, who have talents rather than ideals. So based on skills, that's a natural transition.</p>

Respondent	Leadership	Decision Making	Human Resource Practices
<p>Mywheels</p> <p>Henry Mentink</p>	<p>I have set up the first professional Wereldwinkel. The idea was, start small, no complicated financing, we already did that with crowdfunding.</p> <p>Most of it is experience. But I also work a lot with listening to chance, from insights. If there's something going on, I wait for an insight.</p> <p>I really believe that the way you behave towards others, influences your results.</p>	<p>Our business is a sociocracy, there's no voting, by a creative process you reach good decisions. You sit around a table and discuss until nobody is opposed to the decision anymore, not everyone has to agree but they have to be able to live with it.</p> <p>You try to create the feeling that everyone supports it. What we sometimes do if we can't come to a decision is doing a three month pilot. Then there's no discussion anymore and everyone just has to wait and see whether it works.</p> <p>When I started with the company I leased cars when I had no money and bought cars if I had money. Leasing cars is way more expensive, so in 2006 I said we have to stop leasing and only buy.</p> <p>After a crowdfunding action I got a letter from the tax authorities that I was possibly involved in illegal activities. What you then can do is hire a lawyer, but that's too expensive, so I thought I'm going to send love to that bank. Approach them in a friendly manner and answer all their questions. In the end wonderful things which I hadn't expected happened.</p>	<p>We call customers, members, because a member can be a customer, investor and employee. A customer that manages a car gets free kilometers as a sort of reward. In this way the lines between what is the company and who are the customers fades.</p>
<p>Starsock</p> <p>Eric Roosen</p>	<p>They call me a sockologist, I have become the specialist in this product class.</p> <p>My personal vision leads the company's vision, the owner leads the direction of the company. I have always put that personal touch in the company.</p> <p>If you study for a year, you'll know everything about socks. You can build up knowledge but you have to feel your own vision.</p> <p>The way you are is a unique characteristic, if you, as an entrepreneur, can commercialize your personal characteristics, then you have something unique</p>	<p>I don't have to ask shareholders what's important.</p> <p>When times are tough you think about your beautiful goal, but also when times are good, you earn a lot of money, you have to be careful with that money. So don't buy a Ferrari straight away because a Ferrari is not in line with your final goal. So that money I put in this sustainable building, through which we can transmit the sustainability message.</p> <p>I'll never run a big risk, if I have to invest two million tomorrow I won't do it, that doesn't fit in the road towards my dream.</p> <p>That's also a phase, on day one it's purely based on your own feeling because you're alone. Now we</p>	<p>These advisors are experts in logistics, finances and commerce, they're my board of advisors.</p> <p>So in the first phase everything was based on feeling, then came a moment at which I hired skilled staff and in that phase also the management team started.</p> <p>I'm very open to getting new knowledge into the company and I work together with students.</p> <p>By telling the story we get in touch with the right people. because we're special, we create a magnet, and special people, organizations and developments come to us. We created that magnet and we can now choose the best students.</p>

Respondent	Leadership	Decision Making	Human Resource Practices
		<p>have a company with 10 million in revenues and that needs to be managed. I have a team of 5 people who determine our strategic policy, that's unique in a SME company, a management team of 5 people, in a company with 14 employees.</p> <p>The big problem is the founder of the company, on day one everything goes fine. But the founder has a certain span of control and can only do three things at once, I found that out through failures, trial and error and loss of money. So to spread the message you have to build up a stable company.</p>	
<p>Souपालicious Milco Aarts</p>	<p>I have been a journalist for 35 years, I was always thinking conceptually.</p> <p>I had no experience in the food service industry at all. But as a journalist for 35 years you create an enormous network.</p> <p>I want them to buy my soup so they become my friend, a real friend, that's how I see it.</p> <p>We're never trying to convince people but rather tempt them. The inspirational document is also to tempt. So what you do is build up a network. If you have an enormous network you become creative and think of new ways to reach people you couldn't reach before.</p>	<p>We only make things public if they're certain, we don't just tell nice stories, it already has to be there.</p> <p>All subsidies come to an end and it's hard to get new ones. You need to demonstrate your business model works. The story can be very beautiful but if the budget isn't right, you're done.</p> <p>For example in the Broodzaak, I can do a pilot there and sell 30 liters of soup every day or I can do promotion, I just look which buttons I need to turn to be successful. If we're successful in one Broodzaak we can expand to 38 others in the Netherlands.</p>	<p>I already knew our chef for 20 years. Andrea the manager came to us via the food banks, she had a similar plan as souपालicious but in a less developed stage. Jan-Willem found us, he's the best teacher in Amsterdam. And a lawyer from the Zuid-As has quit his job to come work with us.</p> <p>They're all intrinsically driven but not all from connections We're a professional company. There are different function profiles which we use. We just need very good cooks and they need to be able to work with the participants (people with a distance to the labor market)</p> <p>For everything we need highly qualified people.</p>
<p>Weder Caroline Molenaar</p>	<p>If it's not in your DNA, people see straight away that you're faking it. So if you don't do it with passion, you can better stop, because it's just really hard work. You scream and shout, show your product and in the end the manufacturers start thinking, their idea is nice let's talk to these guys.</p> <p>People like it, nice story. Stories, emotions. Your stories need to stay with people, so you build stories around whatever you do. We have stories on our website.</p>	<p>In the end you notice you need transport for going to fairs, so we bought two vans. We needed it but wouldn't have invested in that if we wouldn't have needed it.</p> <p>Our design decisions mostly come from requests, coincidence or we get a phone call and start working. You just do it. You can wait, but you just have to do it and then you'll see where it goes.</p>	<p>You notice your family wants to help you. You look for people in your own network, they'll help you.</p> <p>It's a risk to involve your family, but you should pay them for their services and not exploit them.</p>

7.4.4 Data Display Entrepreneurial Action 2

Respondent	Strategy	Finance
African Clean Energy Ruben Walker	<p>This problem is gigantic. You need to achieve a large scale en therefore it is important that we're a big and strong company with the right intentions.</p> <p>We are also selling fuel in South-Africa, people buy kerosene there, a horrible fuel and very expensive. When you can combine woodchips with a cook stove and make sure people buy fuel from you, that is a very interesting business. That's what we do and we also export to customers who order a freight container of cook stoves.</p> <p>Sales has never been the bottleneck, we have never produced a unit that wasn't already sold at the moment it was made.</p>	<p>We didn't have any investments from investors yet, but we are trying to raise more capital from impact investors.</p> <p>We got a loan from the South-African government to create jobs and a small one from Philips at the time.</p> <p>We did crowdfunding, a lot of fun but hard work for relatively little money.</p>
Arctic Blue Ludo van de Wiel	<p>This market is not transparent and with that I can distinguish myself from the competition and consumers will appreciate that in the long run, that they can see where the product came from.</p> <p>All of a sudden I got the idea, there's also a picture of a farmer on a milk bottle, so it's not new, but in this sector it is.</p> <p>I know that I as a small start-up won't get big revenues. I'm too small to go to the big retailers and have to make a living with selling on web shops, just to get it all going. I expected that, and I wait patiently.</p>	<p>Savings for now.</p> <p>If you want to scale up, you need external money.</p> <p>I'm now focusing on how to get financing, for working capital actually, I'm interested in a loan at a bank.</p> <p>But you need a good business plan and fulfill certain conditions to be eligible for a loan. That's not easy but I have finished my business plan and will try it.</p>
Beeboxx Peter-Jan Hulsebosch	<p>Our mission statement is to get rid of cardboard moving boxes. That was the introduction of my business plan. Of course this is now a bit wide, as we also want to change the moving industry. The strategy has always been, we start with moving boxes, if we show our added value there, we take the next step. That's always been a long term vision and we started working on that two months ago, transforming the moving industry.</p> <p>This changes our original mission statement a bit, next to the sustainable ideology we also want to go to moving 2.0.</p> <p>We rent thousands of boxes a month, the goal is to conquer 10% of the Dutch market within a few years. We're growing steadily.</p> <p>We're actually a sales and marketing organization, a web shop, people look online for moving boxes and find us.</p> <p>As a goal we rather increase our market share than breaking even. I could have started small scale and be patient and see what happens, but that would take too long.</p> <p>Our goal, our team, me as a shareholder with my partners, our goal is to scale up as fast as possible. That's crucial, because you'll get economies of scale. With a functioning business model, you can optimize variable costs and maximize returns and margins.</p>	<p>The only thing you need is money, you need capital to start-up.</p> <p>I put my own money in, but I also told the story to my friends in a pub and invited them to join in and invest money in return for shares.</p> <p>By doing this I spread the risk and include a few friends with experience.</p> <p>We have started a second round and have found a few investors with experience and knowhow.</p>
Closing The Loop	<p>Our focus and time is on collecting waste in Africa and Asia.</p>	<p>We got sponsoring, we started as a foundation and got support from some big companies who were my clients and who knew the story and liked it.</p>

Respondent	Strategy	Finance
Joost de Kluijver	<p>The foundation started 3 years ago, I worked part time for that. Since last years I started working full time because I established a company next to the foundation.</p> <p>Now we pay a bit less for broken phones, because the worth of the metals in the phones is less than we thought. Also the way of transportation changed because now we know what fits in a container and when it's best to transport it. Also the way of cooperating with governments has changed.</p> <p>The goal is not to be a monopolist. It's fun to start this, but if you want to be bigger you can't do it all alone anymore. It would now be fun to grow and evolve from an executing business to a more knowledge focused consulting business. This is not a mission but just a way of achieving that mission, which we didn't intend to do right at the start.</p>	
GrownDown Town Philip van Traa	<p>We are a cooperation, we say let's work together, we're an open company. We say to others, put your ego aside, our goal is make the city more edible.</p> <p>I should put money on the first place but my goal is I'm on a mission, to make cities greener and more edible.</p> <p>This mission has become more serious, I can't only tell stories, I'm good at that. Actually we earn money with telling stories, and when people like our stories they buy a product from us. If you're a one man company it's fun to tell stories, get an order here and there and make a living, but then you're not being taken seriously.</p> <p>One of our partners is a big company, and very serious. To be their partner you have to be taken serious by them. Otherwise they set you a side and take your concept.</p> <p>We invent the concept, you can steal it, but if you don't take the soul with it, what the concept is, it's never going to work.</p> <p>The trick is a long-term relationship with the customer, temptation. Who earns more money? Delivering once and then nothing any more, or building up a relationship the coming year and doing more and more for your customers. Our mission is also, doing business sustainable, being able to do business for a long time with people.</p> <p>You can write whole reports on how to run your business, but that doesn't work. Everything goes too fast these days, developments go really fast. We use business model canvas, write down in a few words what we do and how. If you make a wrong assumption, you look again at your canvas and change your way of working.</p>	<p>Our big partner finances all the prototypes we develop.</p> <p>Besides a small salary for me and the girls I invest all money back in the company. I invested a lot of money and could have done a lot of nice things with that money.</p> <p>You can't get a loan for these things because the idea is too new and too crazy.</p>
Hemel Bed Madelon Revermann	<p>My goal is to make my company very big, and start a lot of projects for the care of elderly people, so it benefits as many people as possible. So the goals are offering consolation through beauty and helping as many people as possible by running this company. Offering consolation and beauty should be at an affordable price, otherwise not so many people can afford it.</p> <p>What I like is that the factory in Slovakia now works with 10 people with a handicap, so my message gets across.</p> <p>I have been warned by people who said this is a very tough world for you. I thought although it's a tough world, I'll be able to change it somewhere.</p>	<p>I had to invest quite a lot but I didn't want to go to a bank because I thought they would say no. I didn't even consider it. I took my own savings. I used my mortgage, and if I ever end up in bankruptcy I can always sell my house.</p> <p>I was almost out of money, everybody said they liked the concept but I didn't see that back in the sales.</p>

Respondent	Strategy	Finance
	<p>So you let the funeral service providers choose between 0 and 15% and almost everybody takes 15% but there are exceptions. for a 15% margin they're not going to put it in their catalog, they need to really want it. On simple coffins they earn so much that it isn't interesting for them to offer Hemel bed. This margin is a gesture, and I think it is growing towards transparency.</p> <p>I want to keep inviting the "old" sector to join my way of working. I hope I expect the right things and do the right things, I would gladly change it for a better idea, that doesn't matter, what matters is that you reach your goals.</p> <p>First I only did Hemel bed now I also do coaching and therapy again.</p>	<p>Crowdfunding is hard work, really really hard, but it worked out in the end. Crowdfunding starts with a process where you make a plan to show where you want to go and want with the money. I made that and they wanted to support me.</p> <p>I had a plan and an earnings model but I put big question marks to the necessity of this. Because everything changes so fast you can make a new plan every month.</p> <p>Working with investors won't work, they won't focus on the goals of my All Benefit Circle, they just want money from their investment. I can't use that, somebody looking over my shoulder all the time. I would be working very hard an this investor just wants a piece of the pie, that would not motivate me.</p>
<p>Herso Rik Ruigrok</p>	<p>Time is the most important factor in our production process. A normal company buys, produces and sells quick because it has to make money, if I would do that I would be bankrupt in two weeks. The glue needs time, everything would fall apart and come back if I would sell it right away, but because of this time aspect I have had only 17 complaints in 14 years.</p> <p>We haven't had price increases the last eight years and I think we won't have them either in the coming eight years. That's something really weird, but we work with waste and become more efficient every year.</p> <p>At a certain point you need to stop doing what you're doing and turn around a 180 degrees to survive. I said to my wife, if a customer can't pay us at once, but pays us a part every month, would that be a problem? No she said and like that I started leasing tables.</p> <p>I'm going to make a table for a child hospital, a fantastic project. It'll cost a lot of money, time and effort but it's such a joy to do it. Well of course if I would ask money for it, the chance I could make it would be zero. I rather make something beautiful.</p> <p>Tommy of Tilburg University tried to map our production process. Impossible!</p>	<p>I could have fired people but that's not what a family business does, so I invested my last money in the business.</p> <p>We really scary people for the bank. We put money on the last place, I say, environment, society and enjoying work is more important than money.</p> <p>I said to my wife I want to get that leasing model going, and I'm willing to invest all profits into that, because if the bank won't finance us, we'll do it ourselves.</p> <p>I did get a loan at the bank for that machine.</p>
<p>Instock Selma Seddik</p>	<p>Our strategy is to reduce food waste as much as possible. This doesn't have to be only through a restaurant, but also by creating news time, in the form of educational packages, campaigns, new product lines or a take-away counter.</p> <p>We first only focused on the restaurant, later on we started thinking we can also do take-away and go with a food truck to different festivals.</p> <p>But reducing food waste is more important than revenues, but you have to break-even because if you have a good plan and it works, that's just good.</p>	<p>We have start-up capital from the contest and that gives us an advantage compared to other start-ups. We don't have to go through a lot of trouble to get money. We explain our plans to some senior managers of Ahold every month, we tell them we want to break even, what we earned and how much we spent on different things and that we need a new investment.</p>

Respondent	Strategy	Finance
Moyee Coffee Guido van Staveren	<p>That's crucial, I wouldn't have done it if I wouldn't have seen a profitable business model. I'm an entrepreneur so I look for models with which you can have an impact while making a profit. However you do make trade-offs doing that, you don't go for profit maximization like the generation before us. It's about value creation and sharing value, creating shared value. It's an inclusive business model, so by what we do we have an impact, but for profit.</p> <p>The strategy is to go from the premium, high quality coffee market to the mainstream market, we want to improve coffee quality. We want to use better beans for a better product, these are still expensive but once we get economies of scale we can become cheaper. We'll also make coffee's of lower quality, but they'll still be better than the offer now in that segment. That's our strategy and that was already clear in the business plan.</p>	<p>I had some money myself and I invited four friends to invest something.</p> <p>We later on found some impact investors who understood the business model and who helped financing.</p> <p>Although we had a business plan, the probability that it would actually succeed, entering a mature coffee market and starting your own coffee brand with a very low budget, was small. Investors were not standing in line, so we had to prove our concept step by step.</p>
Mywheels Henry Mentink	<p>We are really focused on working together with customers. Our idea is that we don't only share cars, we also share profit and responsibility. We not only offer a sustainable product, we also run our business in a different way.</p> <p>I did not start with the idea to set up a business and put lots of money and time in it and then sell it after 10-15 years for a few million, that didn't fit these principles. So I started as a cooperation with the idea that I could never become rich by selling the place. Because I thought it had to be a natural process, in that way we made it completely community oriented.</p> <p>Spreading the idea. Not to grow as much as possible or to expand to other countries or make profit.</p> <p>We changed the cooperation to a combination of a foundation with a company, the foundation is organized as a sociocracy.</p> <p>When I organize a meeting to speak in local communities I ask people not only to think about car sharing, but about a sharing economy, that's a better story. There are many things happening worldwide, but people like to do something locally, local solar cells, agriculture, and car sharing fits in that. I tell people about how they can participate in the developments towards a new world, and I get people excited. It's not the standard sales talk, you can earn this much with car sharing and it's good for the environment, that's all correct, but people want to enter a new world and that's what I tell them about.</p> <p>That's one of the most important elements of doing business, you don't look for customers but you enter relationships and do business together with these relationships. The idea of crowdfunding is a form of that.</p>	<p>There was no investment needed to start Mywheels.</p> <p>At a certain point I needed a lot of money, I found a family fund that liked our ideology, they invested, not as a shareholder but as a loan. We also started asking money from our members, in return they could get free kilometers, that was a big success, a form of crowdfunding before the term crowdfunding existed.</p>
Starsock Eric Roosen	<p>In the first years profit was important to build this all up. Now we've reached that base, profit has become less important and profit is only an instrument to keep the wheel of sustainability going. I have to be honest, if you'd asked me that question five years ago, the answer would have been different, and maybe different in two years.</p> <p>It's also a phase that we at this time don't sell socks anymore, but we tell the story of successful sustainability which by coincidence is filled in by socks.</p>	<p>Everything you see here is mine, I haven't borrowed any money.</p> <p>I sometimes thought I needed capital but every time I came to the conclusion that this had to be my own.</p>

Respondent	Strategy	Finance
	<p>We've entered the rollercoaster and the cart is slowly going up and we can't get out anymore. It was a conscious choice. If there'll be things on our path that don't fit on our path, we'll make less money.</p> <p>So we have this main sock line running, but we try to increase the sustainable sock line. But only sustainable is impossible because we don't get enough revenues from that, that's why we set up the 2020 strategy.</p>	<p>An investor wants influence, and wants to make money, if you would look at profit, planet and people, the focus of the investor will be on profit</p>
<p>Souपालicious Milco Aarts</p>	<p>We have kept very close to our inspirational document but we only made an extension and that extension is surprise. Souपालicious started because we contacted the food banks and asked if there wasn't something we could do together.</p> <p>The restaurant wasn't planned, but it was the first building somebody offered us.</p> <p>We're not a soup factory, soup is our goal, soup is a means, a means to reach a goal.</p> <p>You can make delicious soup but with that you don't distinguish yourself from the rest. You need to have a real USP and the more unique the USP the more people are attracted by it. We try to use our USP everywhere, and that is that we're a very social company.</p> <p>The biggest target group are businesses, we can never make this profitable if we don't sell business to business. Our mantra is sales, a lot of sales.</p>	<p>Because of an article I wrote, Doen foundation came to us and said they liked our concept and wanted to finance us.</p> <p>If you don't calculate every cent you're without a chance, they'll say come back when you have your business plan ready.</p> <p>I invested money in it myself.</p> <p>We got money from Doen foundation and the ministry of social affairs. We're also going to do crowdfunding so we have different sources.</p> <p>So to get it all going a onetime subsidy was needed, but to get this you need to comply with a range of stringent conditions. If you don't need the money from a subsidy, you absolutely shouldn't do it. We did it because we could start up faster that way.</p>
<p>Weder Caroline Molenaar</p>	<p>It has to be affordable, we don't want ridiculously high prices. They need to be sold for their original value or a bit more if that doesn't work, but it won't be less.</p> <p>We didn't want the product to decrease in value because it would end up at kringloopwinkels (second hand stores). So we went from kringloop to keeping value, that's been a process.</p> <p>We want to keep it as wide as possible. We want people to be conscious of the thing around them and that many things still have a lot of value and you shouldn't write them off just like that. Things deserve a second life, or a third life.</p>	<p>We needed very little and we almost got it for free.</p> <p>We all financed it ourselves with the other business.</p> <p>The only thing we did is we applied for a subsidy. But you have to find somebody to do that for you because it's very complex.</p>

7.4.5 Data Display Entrepreneurial Action 3

Respondent	Marketing	Sustaining Competitive Advantage
<p>African Clean Energy Ruben Walker</p>	<p>It's good business, who's your market? Half of the world population, not only for the cook stove, but possibly also for fuel and everything else.</p>	<p>Nobody does it, Philips has a comparable cook stove, and there's an American company with a comparable one, but ours and Philips' are better.</p> <p>I'm not impressed by our competitors. The market is 560 million households, there's nobody with the capacity to serve even a small part of that.</p>

Respondent	Marketing	Sustaining Competitive Advantage
	<p>It's very simple, we show the product and then you get a lot of orders. People who see it, want it. There many opportunities in Africa because nothing is arranged properly, one of those is fuel.</p> <p>We use micro financing in Lesotho, which works really good. First this was experimental, but now more professional with the help of Kiva, a micro financing platform. We also work with mobile payments.</p> <p>A lot of the sales were export, but we also wanted to bring the cook stove to the market ourselves in Lesotho. It's fun to experiment with that, because it works very well.</p>	<p>There's only competition in getting subsidies, so I wouldn't speak about competition in terms of market share.</p> <p>However some parties get interested in the problem. If you're the one whom the world bank chooses to cooperate with, you'll have a very big customer. So regarding that, it is relevant to scale up fast and stay ahead of the competition.</p>
<p>Arctic Blue</p> <p>Ludo van de Wiel</p>	<p>If you're in a mature, saturated market, you need to come with a unique product. My product is unique because of the quality and sustainability aspects.</p> <p>When I got the idea I was only focusing on the sustainability aspect. I needed an external coach to explain me the marketing principles. There was a lack of knowledge there, and I only picked it up later and applied it in the positioning and story of my product. I learned it by trial and error. I'm still not there but I made some steps.</p> <p>Many consumers are not interested in the environment or whether a product fulfills certain criteria. But I do think it's important, because it's suits my positioning as a natural product from the arctic circle, that's the story, arctic circle, climate.</p> <p>Later on I came to the conclusion that it's not a good idea to put it on the product like this, it doesn't attract the attention of women, so I changed it. I made mistakes.</p>	<p>If you think strategically, how can I make my product unique, so it's harder to copy. On the one hand I do that by using ambassadors, well known Dutch people in the sustainability spheres, gurus who support my product. On the other hand for regular people I try to tell a story about the origin of the product on facebook, where the fisherman tells his story.</p> <p>Every product will have a sender, in this case a fisherman. That cost me a lot of work, this USP, to put this on the product. I had to get in touch with a Norwegian fisherman.</p> <p>When this is successful on the market, there will be copies. It's not hard to put this logo (Msc) on other fish oil products, that's easy, but with this climate logo, the well-known Dutchman and the fisherman I try to distinguish myself and get a sort of first mover advantage.</p>
<p>Beeboxx</p> <p>Peter-Jan Hulsebosch</p>	<p>It's not only the sustainability aspect but also the ease of use aspect. From your house click click click, and we come to your house.</p> <p>85% Of the moving market are people who move by themselves. We jump in on that with our concept. We break it open and now offer a moving service for 300%.</p> <p>The big problem with marketing strategies is that everyone in the Netherlands is a potential target of Beeboxx. I rely on pro-active searches from consumers.</p> <p>You always look for free publicity, getting in touch with newspapers, we have been on TV and radio. There's sporadic attention, but it's a low interest product that has to be top of mind all the time, that's the hardest thing there is in the marketing world. That's impossible and that's also a reason why we enter the moving industry now.</p>	<p>We're cheaper, more sustainable, easier in use and afterwards we clean everything up for you, your stuff is protected better. There are so many USP's that there's no reason to use cardboard boxes.</p> <p>There's no competition, we're the only ones who offer this.</p> <p>In this market it is growth, growth, growth.</p> <p>The idea is easily stolen.</p> <p>A first mover advantage, certainly in online ordering of plastic moving boxes, is the most important. You're a brand name, you have to start alliances, when you work with more established companies it is harder for a new entrant to scale up quickly. We encourage newcomers because we're trying to realize a change in consumer behavior, which takes quite long.</p>

Respondent	Marketing	Sustaining Competitive Advantage
<p>Closing The Loop Joost de Kluijver</p>	<p>It's the African way, that it develops quite well now because people know what we do, we give money for a phone. So they spread the story word of mouth.</p> <p>If for example Ahold has old phones which they don't use anymore, they call me, I buy them and give them a second life in Africa and Asia.</p> <p>We did pilots in 2012 and 2013 in four countries in Africa and Hong Kong. The goal was to see what works, and which partners are good to work with, what we had to pay for a phone, and how to get the phones to the Netherlands.</p> <p>Media exposure such as in the Tegenlicht documentary is very important, and other interviews, that's for a lot of other companies not the case. They benefit from marketing, so their product gets known. A social enterprise benefits from the fact that the problem they solve is known, and that problem is way bigger than my company.</p>	<p>The only thing we can do is scale up and compete on price.</p> <p>We're now working in the whole chain of waste. Collecting, education, involving local players and governments, transporting, recycling and communication in Europe. Those are all tasks other companies could do.</p> <p>We have developed something and there are different fields wherein other parties could say I'm going to help with that or take over. So big companies with more power and knowledge of Africa can have a role in that, and that's certainly necessary.</p>
<p>GrownDown Town Philip van Traa</p>	<p>We had three, four sorts of mint tea which people said tasted like soap. So we knew we had to get these out. So from nine sorts of mint tea you keep around four to five.</p> <p>Hotels, restaurants, and consumers. Consumers for home growing, restaurants for teatables. Rooffood becomes available for consumers soon, for now we only install it in hotels.</p> <p>For rooffood we're now at the point where we ask how we're going to approach consumers. I like warm acquisition and go to hotels and have ten conversations. We take our customers with us, brainstorm, and in the end we have a good product, you can't do that with consumers.</p> <p>We now notice that people call us, so instead of pushing our products to the market, consumers start pulling. But we don't know how hard they're going to pull, and we need to keep on tempting them</p> <p>Some hotels didn't want the teatable because it was too big. I designed a smaller one for on the bar and went back to them. If they then still don't want it you know you're never going to sell it to them.</p> <p>We're going to do something crazy, we're going to make these hotels members of our cooperative. They'll be our long-term partners and we'll do everything we can for them if they in return give us a long-term relationship in which it doesn't matter if we make mistakes and learn from them to improve what we do.</p>	<p>We notice that people steal our plans, and that the ones who steal it can't get it done right. Then I think, that's because they're not like us.</p> <p>The art is in combining things cleverly, but it is preceded by a long learning path. We're continuously learning from our mistakes and steering the right way. Someone who copies the concept didn't go through that learning path, and then they fail quickly.</p> <p>If they copy your concept ten times, and it fails ten times then people will start saying, this rooffood doesn't seem to work. So it will start working against you.</p>
<p>Hemel Bed</p>	<p>I knew quite well in advance what I wanted, a product which gives beauty and consolation at an affordable price.</p>	<p>Other coffins are quite different, screws everywhere, handles made from metal, that all goes into the ground. It can't go into the oven.</p>

Respondent	Marketing	Sustaining Competitive Advantage
Madelon Revermann	<p>My goal is that I can also make something for people who don't fit in standard sized coffins. I'm now working with Staatsbosbeheer to see whether they can supply me with wood.</p> <p>My approach is different, I'm going to inform people, go to fairs and have conversations with people. This goes quite slow, if you're in the catalogs people see your product every time someone passes away. Most people don't need my product right away and it can take another 30 years before I get an order. But I keep informing on facebook and linkedin.</p>	<p>My prices are online but that means that I block the freedom to resell my coffins for 2 or 3 times the original prices. This also means that they don't always put me in their catalogs. If you're not transparent, one day people will choose for transparency because they trust it.</p> <p>I don't like hidden costs or ways of earning something. Sharing costs is fine with me, you don't have to make a loss but you don't have to see it as a profit object. The ignorance of people is sort of translated to an earnings model, I don't like that. A simple coffin is bought for 70 euro's and sold for 400-500 euro's, and what did the funeral service provider do for it? They made a phone call.</p> <p>There are other clean coffins but small scale, that's good, the cleaner the better. There's a woman who makes coffins from biopolymers, I have been in touch with her. She is still in a prototype stadium, but once she starts production we'll meet and see how we can promote sustainability in this sector.</p> <p>It's just not right. I know from the fairs that people are touched by my products, but if I look at the sales, some have it in their catalog but haven't sold a single Hemel bed in 2 years. My product is affordable.</p>
Herso Rik Ruigrok	<p>We told our clients, the furniture retailers, that they can't put on 100% margins, we don't want that. We told them ,we give you a price and expect you to put on a margin with a maximum of 35%. Many retailers didn't like that and left.</p> <p>Many people want to buy and have something, they don't want to lease. I can say I don't want to sell something, but the customer is king. Some customers do want to lease, but I have to take care because these are idealist or people without money, but both people with little money.</p> <p>If somebody tells me Rik, I need a 1000 tables, then I just can't deliver them, I need time in the production process.</p>	<p>People see we have something special. I have noticed a few times that companies tried to copy us but they made the same mistake as I did 14 years ago. They don't take the time in the process and their products fall apart. They would have been able to do it if they would have taken the time.</p> <p>Sometimes we notice that our waste tables of a certain type of wood become cheaper than tables made out of freshly cut wood, this proves to me that resource prices are rising and that my concept is working. Many people said, being sustainable is expensive, but I proved that's not the case.</p>
Instock Selma Seddik	<p>I know Samuel Levie of Brand and Levie Saucages, in the food sector almost everybody knows him. If he posts something on facebook you reach a lot of people.</p> <p>In the beginning we didn't think that well about our target group, we just thought young people. Now we're open we notice that people of all ages come, also a lot of old people who read the newspaper and are curious. It is very mixed but of course people who can afford going out for dinner and live nearby.</p> <p>Varied conscious people, young and old. When we're in the media abroad, we notice that a lot of people from that country come to our restaurant.</p>	<p>We don't see other entrepreneurs as competitors. We cooperate a lot with people who have similar initiatives, also through the YFM, it's a small world. We are also part of the FSEN, the Food Surplus Entrepreneurs Network, a European network in which there are a lot of other food entrepreneurs. We share our issues, because we run into the same problems. The market is so big and we just started, one third of all food produced is thrown away, there's more than enough.</p> <p>There's no other restaurant in the Netherlands working with only waste food. A regular restaurant next door would be competition, but I think there's enough room for restaurants otherwise.</p>

Respondent	Marketing	Sustaining Competitive Advantage
<p>Moyee Coffee</p> <p>Guido van Staveren</p>	<p>People who like coffee, people who understand the world works differently and that business can be run in a different way, people who believe in the new economy, in change, disruption. That's who we focus on.</p> <p>That was also in the business plan but it changes, we get plumbers, roofers, but also lawyers, we don't know who our target group is.</p> <p>People buy it, although it is the champagne within the coffee market, nobody drinks that all day long. We are also going to make cheaper coffees, because this is expensive, but cheap in comparison with other quality coffees in the same market segment.</p>	<p>No, competition is really not important.</p> <p>The big coffee companies got big in a time in which their shareholders wanted profit maximization, so I don't trust them when they say they want to do it differently. My model is not to convince the big multinationals to take another course, my model is, I put a radical new model next to theirs and show that it works, and hope that they'll copy it". If they copy it, fine, I'll stop I proved my point, I they don't copy it, I'll become as big as them.</p> <p>I don't worry about it, it is a hard market because it's very mature. It's the biggest market after oil with 80 billion, everything has been done already and there's no growth, not in Europe. So every kilo we sell, we take from somebody else. We're in the premium segment, real quality coffee, where several small brands are establishing themselves, we're one of them. We have the same sort of super coffee, but we just have a superior ideology, with that we distinguish ourselves. We have to work together with these smaller players and make a fist towards Nestle and Douwe Egberts, we need to get their kilos.</p> <p>So yes we're competing in our own little segment, but I want a segment in which we can compete with the big boys, and in that direction I'm going now.</p>
<p>Mywheels</p> <p>Henry Mentink</p>	<p>By looking at how people reserved cars I made adaptations in the hour rate and the start rate. People reserved a car for one hour in the morning and one in the afternoon, that way nobody else could use the car all day, so I increased the start rate so the first hour becomes more expensive. In that way I improved it step by step.</p> <p>We had an approach to spread our idea by word of mouth, however we're now also doing things on facebook and twitter. If somebody calls and says can you place a car in Bunnik, I'll say I would like to but you have to organize a meeting and invite everyone you know, the whole neighborhood. If we reach 7-10 members I'll place a car there.</p> <p>It's networking, another way of approaching things.</p>	<p>If you want to do something beautiful in the world, then you have to do it together and then there are no competitors. The platform we build, where our cars are on, I already said we share profit but we also share what we've made.</p> <p>Anwb car sharing started March this year, we built that, so speaking in old terms, we establish our own competitors, just to see how we can stimulate car sharing together.</p> <p>These competitors can decide to start thinking in a competitive way. Even if they would, we put them there, spreading the idea, that's our main purpose.</p> <p>It's a completely different approach, which does not think in terms of competition.</p>
<p>Starsock</p> <p>Eric Roosen</p>	<p>In the beginning the positioning was the feeling of Eric Roosen, he'll do anything for you. I had to do everything for my customers and give them that feeling, and I have always done that, that was the only thing I had. Now we position us as, if you work with us everything'll be fine.</p> <p>It's always been the idea to work with big retailers because I want to do everything for them, but they need to guarantee a certain amount of revenues for all the work I do. If a customer is too small we say no.</p>	<p>Despite being in this tough market, I do say to the retailers we're special.</p> <p>In the area of socks we have a 100 competitors and we'll lose that battle on price. In the area of sustainability we're unique, and we try to expand that uniqueness.</p> <p>We contact the owners of big retailers, so not the lower level procurement staff. If we get in touch with the owners they'll say wow that's special I want to have that, they'll tell their procurement staff to buy from Starsock. That's our only</p>

Respondent	Marketing	Sustaining Competitive Advantage
	<p>Our customers are the aggressive big retailers, so if they buy from us they can focus on buying pajamas, we'll buy their socks. But also that when Starsock is one of your suppliers, you're really special, then you work together with a special company. We're building that up now, that's not easy.</p> <p>The retailers become tougher, crises, bankruptcy, competition, they want cheaper, cheaper, but we say no, better, better. We're struggling to tell our story in this market.</p>	<p>chance to get in touch, but because that doesn't always work we still have a normal sock line.</p> <p>Every company can copy another company but they can't copy the soul of the entrepreneur, and that's me. So you have to be innovating all the time.</p>
<p>Souपालicious Milco Aarts</p>	<p>We're very consciously going towards vegetarian soups. Low on sugar, salt and fat. We offer very healthy soups and they're biological.</p> <p>We sell our healthy soups to companies and help them to address their sustainability challenges that way.</p> <p>Things that are delicious or very beautiful are never sustainable, so we have to be a company which is working visibly with a lot of joy and makes people happy, and that's what we do.</p> <p>I invest a lot in that, talking to people because they're very sensitive, especially for the sustainability story. It's all about your story, which story you tell with your soup.</p> <p>Especially office workers and students come here. In the weekends we do salsasoup or soulsoup for people who like to dance. And that hasn't changed, we always wanted to serve office workers and schools. We however cut it up and the mobile soupcarts come later.</p> <p>We don't position ourselves as soup but as (maaltijd)soup. We can't compete with powder and water. That's a thing you need to learn, what's your positioning and how do you communicate that.</p>	<p>I don't see other entrepreneurs as competitors. We have a USP which is our contract with the food banks that we produce and distribute Souprise.</p> <p>I don't have competitors, they're simply not there. I support everyone who does good things. I haven't seen a similar story in the Netherlands.</p> <p>I hope we do get competitors, the more, the better, let them come.</p> <p>The only competitors we have are the big catering organizations. They have contracts, but I also want to sell soup in companies but I'm too small to be seen.</p> <p>I'm market leader in my niche because I'm the only one. We build that up, we have a brand name and for another company it will take a lot more time and money to rise above our brand name. So every day we build up an advantage.</p>
<p>Weder Caroline Molenaar</p>	<p>Our colleagues, interior architects like our concept, that's a target group. They don't have time to do the work we do, so we help them. We try to find new target groups every time, who think this is interesting.</p> <p>Customers are, manufacturers. Also target groups who are open for our products. Because we're architects we also design interior, mostly for environmental organizations, or restaurants with biological products, government institutions that want to be proud and show how sustainable they are.</p> <p>The kringloopwinkels thought our products were interesting but their customers want to buy something cheap and renovate it themselves. We couldn't sell our products there.</p>	<p>We don't see competitors. We do see other designers such as Herso, but they are in another price segment.</p> <p>I would like it if everybody would start thinking like that. We're not scared of copycats, we'll be doing other things then. There are so many products you can do something with. A lot of manufacturers think this is interesting and ask us what we can do with their waste. A while ago I got a phone call, somebody said I have 80 glass plates here, what can you do with it?</p>