

Media Capital
SilverSun

Hilversum is a creative digital economy. Our city has been the media capital of the Netherlands for many years. The media industry remains a powerhouse in our city today, embracing some of the most sophisticated technologies around and fuelled by digital innovation and creativity. The latest news, hottest websites, games, virtual events and digital applications are all conceived, created, and aired here.

Creating is what we do: we are set designers, architects, graphic designers, web designers, podcasters, showrunners, musicians and digital creatives. Dutch broadcasting history began right here, in our city. We continue to shape the future of the creative digital industry and media: national and international.

Welcome in Hilversum

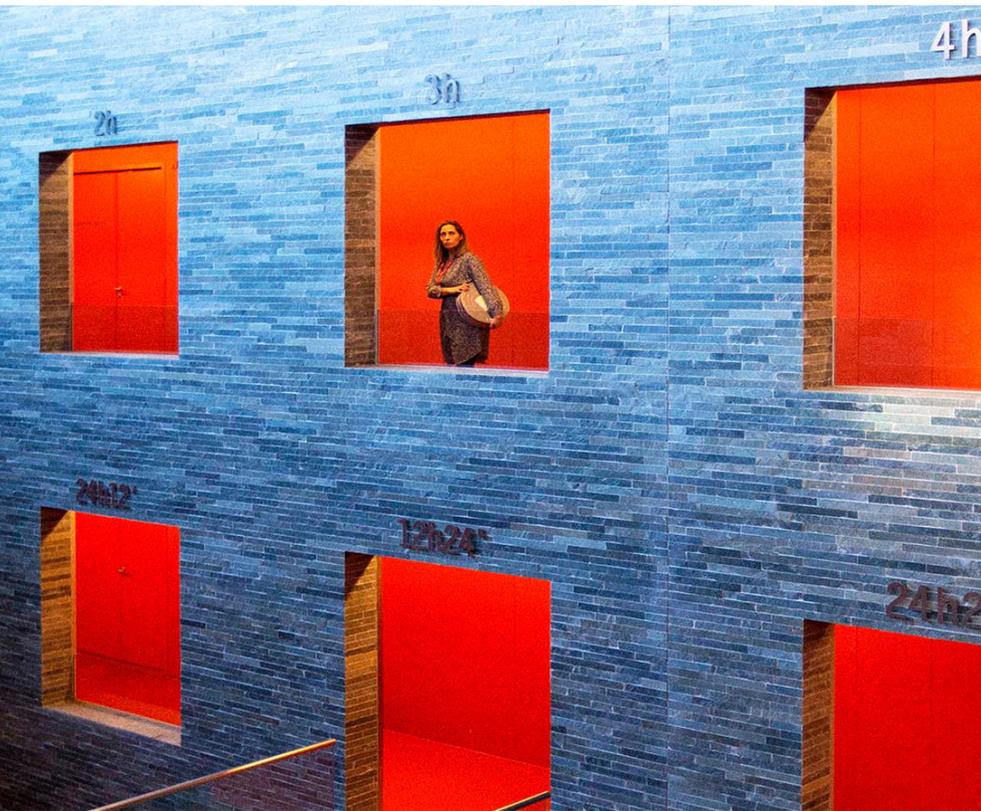


a creative vibe

competitive prices

international schools

easily accessible



Hilversum is located in the centre of the Media Valley: an exceptional concentration of digital media companies that runs from Amsterdam to Utrecht.

The media industry is concentrated in our city, where technology, production, entertainment, and broadcasting have been part of the city's infrastructure for over a century. A unique and inviting setting for creative entrepreneurs in virtually any field – that's Hilversum's strength.

Mediavalley

Institute for Sound and Vision

A leading international expertise centre for media culture and audio-visual archiving, ranging from digitisation, conservation, metadata through to experimentation with the latest technologies.

Media Perspectives

An innovation platform for media companies and professionals. Guides media companies, media professionals and young talents (talent development program) through this digital transformation.

Dutch Media Week

Annual festival for media creators and media consumers: from knowledge-sharing on media innovations to a look behind the scenes at the Open Studio Days.

AMSTERDAM

HILVERSUM

UTRECHT

Rik Oostenbroek

Born and raised in Hilversum (and, for the record, still residing in the southern part of that city), Rik Oostenbroek finds it tricky to describe himself, being a man of many talents. His bread and butter is digital creation, and the elements he tends to look for are colour, composition and a certain level of abstraction. His work ranges from print to animation, from 2D to 3D and from portraiture to typography. 'Do I consider myself an artist or a designer? As far as I'm concerned, I'm simply Rik.'





I would just mess around on the computer and make random things, just to entertain myself.

Having worked all over the world – Los Angeles being his favourite destination – Rik has been based in Hilversum's Stookplaats enterprise centre for the past few years. It's a relaxed and creative space where he rents an office from which he sends his work to clients worldwide. When we go to meet Rik for our interview, he is waiting outside a warehouse. 'This is a really wonderful space, and the fact that the people who work here are pretty great too makes it very special.'

From Windows Paint to Photoshop

'Yes, that's how it all started. I'm not sure why, but I simply started "painting" when I would come home in the afternoons, during my lunch breaks at school. I would just mess around on the computer and make random things, just to entertain myself. It was only later, when a good friend showed him designs online produced by an Austrian designer, that Rik became truly inspired. It prompted him to start experimenting, initially by creating things in Photoshop.'

Secret Showcase

Rik was content simply doing his own thing, until one day he started publishing his work on his own website: Secret Showcase, a name he came up with one night when he was messing around with Photoshop. When he discovered at one point that he had racked up 120,000 page views, he knew there was an audience out there for his work, mostly online.

'This was kind of before social media became a "thing," although there were a few blogs devoted to the type of work I was doing. One of those sites was called Deviant Art. I would post my work there and meet like-minded people who were also into that style. I was very happy to discover an online community where I could really let my creativity run wild. Then, one day, I received a call from Volkswagen. They asked me to do a job for them and said they'd pay me 1,200 euros. That's a lot of money for an 18-year-old! That's when things began to really take off and I started getting more work.'

I started doing this work as a hobby, and becoming a professional designer is quite a different thing altogether.

Although Rik did not really set goals for himself, his reputation grew and he began to attract business from larger companies and brands. He also developed a bit of a fan base online: people who liked his work and encouraged him to keep doing his thing.

'For whatever reason, people started noticing my work. But it was never intentional – it simply happened,' Rik says. He lived in Montreal for a spell and would sometimes spend a month in New Jersey, New York City, or Los Angeles. However, in the end he would always return to his hometown of Hilversum.

Designer or artist?

'I'm not really sure I can answer that question. I simply make things. You might describe me as a creator of images, but one who has his own distinct style. Some agencies didn't really know what to make of me, as I didn't fit into a neat box. They would simply hire me and allow me to do my thing. The projects I worked on ranged from the National Postcode Lottery to scenic landscapes for Mazda ads.'

But after a while I felt that I'd been there, done that. Creatively, it was somewhat restrictive, as you're always working with some product or other. Someone will hand you a Hero Shot, and you're supposed to create your design around that. The fact that everything always revolves around the product does get tired after a while. So there's always going to be a bit of creative sacrifice in that sense. But those commercial jobs also give me freedom: financial independence to do what I want in the end!

What makes him proud?

'I started doing this work as a hobby, and becoming a professional designer is quite a different thing altogether.'

Ever since that first assignment from Volkswagen, the work has been pouring in. He has been able to work his magic for some major global brands, something that makes him quite proud. Rik: 'One thing I am proud of is my global ambassadorship for HP. I'm one of the six people featured in the advertising campaign for their new line of creative equipment, including monitors, printers and desktop

People take me seriously for something I started on a lark in my bedroom.

computers. My work and I both appear in the campaign. It's a lot of fun to be part of such a major project. The fact that they picked me out of millions of designers and other creatives is just such a thrill. It means I'm doing something right and that my work stands out. People take me seriously for something I started on a lark in my bedroom. Makes for a pretty good story so far, wouldn't you agree?'

Hilversum and beyond?

'The first time I came here, to the Stookplaats, I didn't expect I'd come to feel so at home – it didn't really seem like my kind of place at first. I used to work from home, from my kitchen table, but sometimes I felt I needed to step away from it all. Also, I couldn't possibly do everything. I've managed to find people here I can collaborate with: people who inspire me and whom I can just sit around with and chat with from time to time. It's helped me to become a little less obsessive about my work, and more balanced. I'm very content right now, here in my small workspace. I sometimes fantasise about living in a fancy penthouse in LA, but how realistic is that? And you

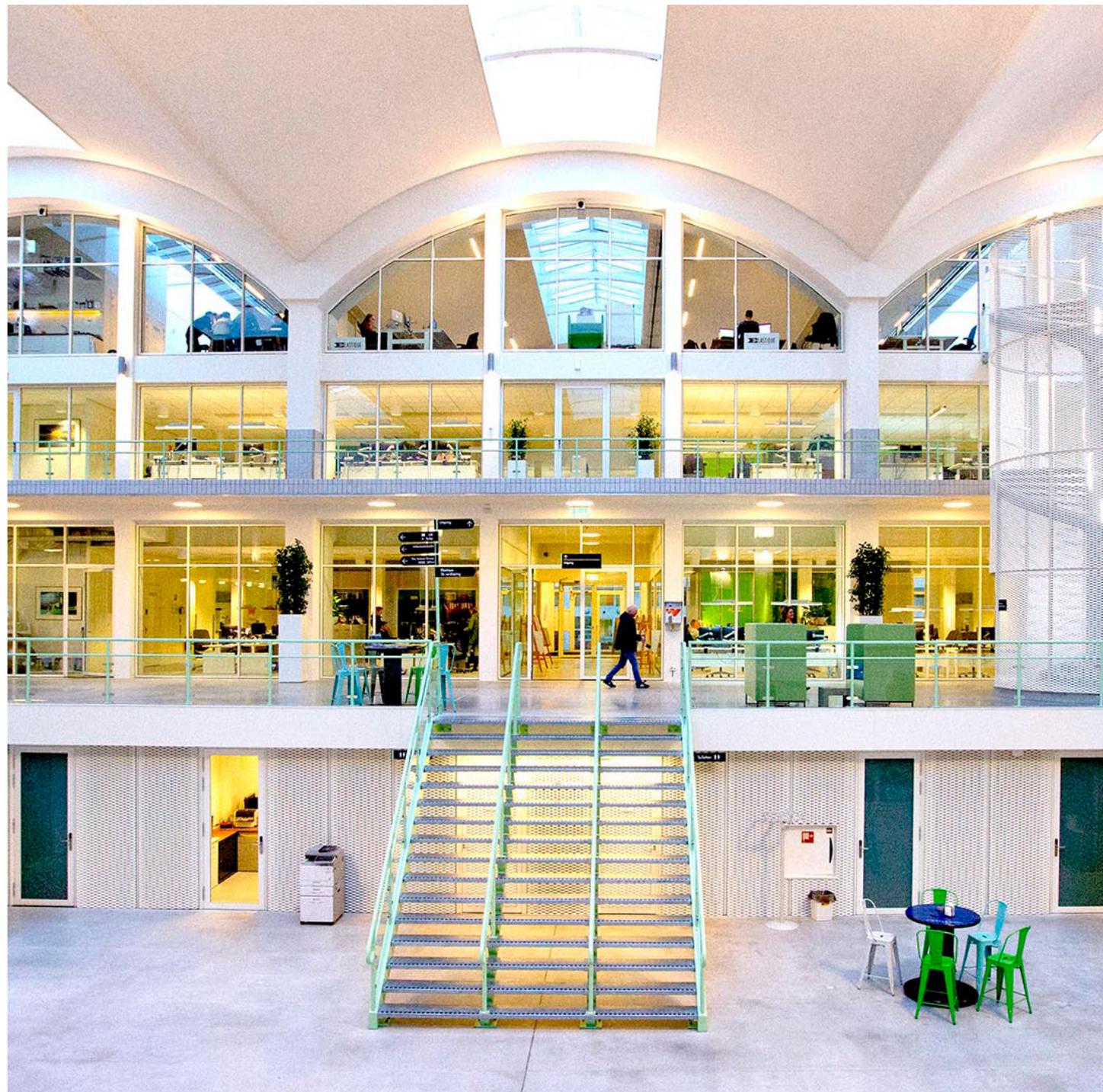
know, Hilversum is really not such a bad place to live. Amsterdam and Utrecht are right around the corner, although they're both a bit too touristy for my taste. Here, I'm surrounded by people with whom I can sit down and have a beer, and who'll distract me from my work from time to time. I also still see some of my friends from secondary school. That's something I wouldn't trade for anything.'

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Creative makers

Hilversum is a creative hotspot right in the heart of the Netherlands. Whether you're talking media giants, music entertainers, gifted designers, or young entrepreneurs. Hilversum creates with 6.000 mediaprofessionals and 12.000 creative talents.

Companies that are located here are NIKE, NEP The Netherlands, Red Bee Media, MediaMonks, Universal Music Group, Warner Music, United and national broadcasters such as TALPA and RTL and many more.





Inspiring workspaces

Whether you're a start-up, scale-up, or multinational, Hilversum welcomes you and your business. With beautiful corporate villas, 90 hectares of business premises, iconic media buildings and creative working spaces, there truly is something for everyone.

The Media park accommodates a large collection of media and broadcasting companies and Arenapark is the homebase of international companies such as Nike's European Headquarters.



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|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 1 Wisseloord | 4 Media Park | 7 Kantoorvilla | 10 H-Park |
| 2 MCO | 5 Beeld en Geluid | 8 De Melkfabriek | 11 Werf35 |
| 3 Bergweg | 6 M Mediagebouw | 9 De Grossierderij | 12 Arenapark |



Hilversum is located just 20 minutes from Amsterdam and Utrecht by car and by train. Owing to its central accessibility in the Netherlands, Hilversum is an excellent location for companies with a domestic or international focus.

You can be at Schiphol International Airport in just 30 minutes. Eindhoven and Rotterdam Airport can also be reached within one hour. Hilversum's train station is just a one-minute walk from the city centre. The Media Park and Arenapark have their own railway station. Cycling is one of the easiest ways to get around the city of Hilversum.

Perfect location

20 minutes **Utrecht**

20 minutes **Amsterdam**

60 minutes **Rotterdam**

30 minutes **Schiphol Airport**

60 minutes **Rotterdam The Hague Airport**

60 minutes **Eindhoven Airport**



Martin Jessurun

Warner Music Benelux

Martin Jessurun's father always wanted him to be a doctor, but he was drawn more to the music industry. After working part time as a DJ (with his own drive-in show, no less) and a stint working at record store Kareltye in Utrecht, he knew he'd found his niche, and ever since then Martin has been all about the music. As president of Warner Music Benelux, he oversees an impressive roster of Dutch and international recording artists.





Back in the old days, simply having a catchy tune would be enough. If a song was infectious and had a good beat, you knew it would turn out to be a hit.

‘I don’t need to do anything’

‘I think I’ve always decided myself what to do and how to do it, and have never felt forced in that sense. It started at a young age, when my father told me he wanted me to be a doctor when I grew up. I dislike the idea of having to do anything. I started making money, and getting involved in music, at a young age. I’ve always had an interest in music as long as I can remember. Being able to make my own decisions was always more important to me than anything, and I ended up moving to Hilversum to find work in the music industry.’

Warner

‘I joined Warner – which was then still known as Warner-Elektra-Atlantic (WEA) – when I was 23 years old. My first job was as a press promoter, but since that wasn’t really my thing, I switched to radio promoter one year later. After 10 years, I was offered the job of marketing director, and in 2007 I took over as president. As a record label, Warner Music Benelux acts as a

liaison between our recording artists and their audiences. We operate worldwide and promote our artists and their music to millions of people.’

Warner’s head office – an elegant villa in a leafy neighbourhood – is in Hilversum. Martin knew what he was doing when he picked the building, preferring this warm, homely residential property with its lovely garden to a modern office building, which he thinks of as “ice boxes.”

‘I wanted a place where people would know what sort of company we are as soon as they walk in the door: a record company brimming with positive energy. Instead of cold, minimalistic and sterile spaces, we offer a warm and friendly environment where people – whether they’re artists, employees or visitors – feel right at home.’

Creativity always comes first

‘The whole digital revolution has changed the way we operate over the past two decades: in what format we release our music, who we market it to and how people listen to it...

We’re located in the best spot in town. What more do you want?

But our business hasn’t changed fundamentally: we continue to discover and develop our artists, help increase their fan base and making sure their music is available on all the main platforms, including traditional record shops, online retailers and streaming services.’

‘Back in the old days, simply having a catchy tune would be enough. If a song was infectious and had a good beat, you knew it would turn out to be a hit. It takes a lot more than that these days – every performer needs a story, and that story needs to be unique to boot. Storytelling in all its facets has become important. Social media has opened up possibilities for artists to show people more of their lives. The flip side is that they’re also expected to show a lot more: what food and drink they consume, how they spend their days, and so on. All this calls for a lot more creativity than before. You should try to make the most of the resources available to us today, such as data. R&A (Research & Analysis) plays a huge role, but only after an artist has released their music – it can’t predict whether this or that performer will be successful. Every artist is unique, so

you need to be willing to take risks and listen to your gut feeling when deciding whether to sign and support a particular act.’

What makes him proud?

‘The entertainment industry is highly dynamic and changing rapidly. Looking back on the past year, I’m very proud of our alliance with the 9292 travel app. Consumers who use this app to check timetables are offered custom-made playlists, tailored to the length of the journey and the passenger’s Spotify play history. We will be soon start working with them even more closely. Another fun project was the Ed Sheeran pop-up store, which sold exclusive merchandise. It’s a fine example of how you can mobilise people even when the artist himself is not available for promotional duties.’

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'But what I'm especially proud of is our company's growth in recent years, the people who work here, and the new acts we've signed. That takes creativity, gut feeling, and making the right decisions. Of course, I'm well aware of the targets set by the company, but an environment where people are given the opportunity to develop, fail from time to time and create their own identities ultimately contributes the most to our success as a company.'

Hilversum and beyond

Warner Music Benelux has been based in Hilversum from the very start, and their current location feels like a second home both to employees and to the artists who pop in regularly. 'This place embodies what we're about as a company. The company has grown in size. We established a local division for Dutch acts in 2013 and continue to expand. We're located in the best spot in town. What more do you want?'

I wanted a place where people would know what sort of company we are as soon as they walk in the door: a record company brimming with positive energy.

Wonderful (expat) life

Hilversum is a city of surprises, right in the middle of the lush green Gooi region. Discover the city's concept stores and artisan bakeries, renowned museums, the Metropole Orchestra, and architectural highlights, surrounded by forest and heathland.

The high-quality facilities include: educational institutions including excellent international schools, the Tergooi hospital and many sports clubs and societies. It is a sought-after city with different activities every weekend. Hilversum is a dynamic city that's truly alive.

Expats Centre IN Amsterdam

Haven't got your bearings yet in the city? The experts at the expat centre will support you with information about housing, education, opportunities for development, and more.



Former gaming industry professional Gerben Pasjes joined TV tech company NEP The Netherlands a year ago. Whereas many have predicted the demise of traditional media, Gerben sees a world of opportunities in this field. Gerben and his team are using augmented reality to develop entire digital studios and sets for TV formats worldwide.

Gerben Pasjes

NEP





Augmented reality is not just a solution; it's also increasingly used as the basis for TV productions.

Gaming vs designing solutions

'I always really enjoyed working in the gaming industry, which is not surprising as I do have a degree in game design. But after working in the industry for about three years, I knew I was ready for a change. You see, my real passion was and is drawing – I think it's just the coolest thing ever. But then I went on to do some more research, specifically into effective design. I found that, although I liked creating beautiful images, it's not as interesting as designing the right solution – I think that's where the added value comes in. I discovered that what really interested me was concept development. It involves talking to people, discussing the problem together, listening to a client's needs and then designing a solution that meets those needs. I really get to use my drawing skills – or rather my 3D design skills – to solve problems. My job now involves so much more than simply producing attractive illustrations.'

Gaming roots

'In the digital world, when you design and build something, you can easily have it tested and tweaked where needed. I really like that part of the job: the fact that you can come up with an idea on the spot, test it, and see if it works. At some point I learned that NEP were looking for people with knowledge of augmented reality, which happens to be my area of expertise! It's about launching and using new technologies that are still largely unknown to the public in the world of television. You can do just about anything with augmented reality, but it's people's budgets and needs that ultimately determine the stuff we design. Game technology serves as the basis for the solutions we design here. What we basically do is design digital studios and environments and subsequently project these in a green box or green room. We work with a whole team of 3D artists to create all these amazing solutions, and I have the privilege of managing that team. It's been a thrill all the way!'

We have access to a lot of well-trained technical professionals in the Netherlands, but we need more and more of that talent every year.

NEP

'A lot of my job involves talking to clients, many of whom are national and international broadcasters. I basically act as a liaison between our clients and our team. Clients tells us what they want, what they've got in mind, and I eventually work those ideas into a solution. I then brief the team on this solution, and we work out the design together. It's an intense, but also very rewarding process, in which concept, technology and design all come together.'

Augmented reality

'The possibilities of augmented reality combined with TV are endless, of course – and we're one of the few companies that have truly mastered the art. We also spend a lot of time together as a team, doing much more than just creating augmented reality environments. We are finding that we're playing the dual role of technical partner and creative partner. Augmented reality is not just a solution; it's also increasingly used as the basis for TV productions. So it's becoming more common for clients to

ask us to develop an overall concept, including the branding. This means not just implementing ideas, but being there right at the start of a project, which includes designing the look and feel of the channel and the new studio settings. We are seeing an increase in these types of projects. Technology is also changing faster than ever before, so there's a lot more we're capable of doing in terms of technology and design. With all the advances that have been made, augmented reality takes place virtually in real time. Soon enough, we won't even need a green room anymore; you'll simply be able to walk outside with a camera in a location, and the technology will then enhance your setting with augmented reality in real time. I think it will take another three years or so for us to get there, but there's no doubt it will happen.'

With all the advances that have been made, augmented reality takes place virtually in real time.

Hilversum and beyond?

'Most of our clients are broadcasters, so it makes sense for us to be based in the Media Park. We have access to a lot of well-trained technical professionals in the Netherlands, but we need more and more of that talent every year. I feel Hilversum is a good city when it comes to attracting talented people. Fortunately, we're not tied to any specific location at NEP, since our company operates worldwide. My team and I take on projects from all over the world, so our location will become less relevant in the future. There just needs to be an airport nearby, and fortunately Schiphol is not too far away.'

Soon enough, we won't even need a green room anymore: you'll simply be able to walk outside with a camera in a location, and the technology will then enhance your setting with augmented reality in real time.

Hilversum supports you

Hilversum welcomes new businesses with open arms. We are happy to provide advice and share recommendations. Our city offers a unique business climate due to its strong concentration of creative, technology, and media companies. You will find a valuable network literally around the corner. There are also many organisations that advise businesses in the city and at regional level and good educational institutions. Hilversum offers all ingredients for human capital to grow and innovate.

MBO College Hilversum

School for post-secondary vocational education with courses in 15 sectors, such as Media & IT with 1700 students as one of the highlights. Working closely with companies around the city is a second nature for this school.

Make IT Work

Academy of the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences that retrains highly educated people without a specific IT background to bachelor level IT-positions in software development, cyber security and data analytics.

Education hub Media Park

The Media Park is a landing place for tech and media students from all over the country (and beyond). Year-round thousands of students do their internship here or collaborate in one of the hackathons and challenges that are organized by Media Perspectives. Here you can also find the executive master Media Innovation (Breda University of Applied Sciences), the Media & Business honours project (Erasmus University) and the Media Technology training (NEP, MBO College Hilversum and XR Lab, a high end student training company for AR/VR and other new technologies).

Universities of Amsterdam and Utrecht

With Amsterdam and Utrecht only 20 minutes away, there is a strong collaboration between Hilversum based companies and the excellent universities of Amsterdam and Utrecht. They offer any bachelor and master you can think of. Especially interesting are their bachelors for Communication, Multimedia and Design, Audiovisual Media, Interaction Design and the master Data Driven Design and the master Digital Design.

Contact

Do you have specific questions about doing business in Hilversum or are you looking for a sparring partner? Then contact the municipality of Hilversum and they will help you get started.

Call 14035 or e-mail to a.boerkamp@hilversum.nl.

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