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### AMSTERDAM MADE GENOMINEERD BIJ COOLEST DUTCH BRANDS

## ‘Wij laten zien wat de Amsterdamse makers in huis hebben’

Amsterdam Made is genomineerd bij Coolest Brands 2024. De organisatie helpt duurzame maakondernemers uit de regio Amsterdam met extra exposure, media-aandacht en bovendien is het een keurmerk. Managing Director Marit Timmerman vertelt hoe de kleine club nu ook landelijk gaat.



**Marit Timmerman:** ‘Amsterdam Made is opgericht naar voorbeeld van San Francisco Made. Dat is een miljoenenbedrijf waar ongeveer 700 maakbedrijven bij zijn aangesloten. Amsterdam Made is acht jaar geleden gestart; op dat moment wilde de Gemeente Amsterdam een keurmerk introduceren van mooie dingen die in de stad worden gemaakt. Vanuit die gedachte ontstond ‘Amsterdam Made’: we laten zien wat de Amsterdamse makers in huis hebben. Onze organisatie is wel heel anders dan de versie in de VS hoor, daar heb je bijvoorbeeld een enorme sponsorcultuur en hier niet. Levi Strauss alleen al trekt daar voor een groot deel de kar.’

#### keurmerk met inhoud

*Wat is jullie missie?*

‘Wij willen de consument bewust laten worden van het feit dat je kwalitatief goede producten gewoon om de hoek kan kopen. Ons keurmerk staat voor lokaal geproduceerd met zoveel mogelijk

ingrediënten van eigen bodem, een zo duurzaam mogelijk maakproces en creativiteit en vakmanschap. We geven dat keurmerk uit en zorgen ervoor dat al die mooie bedrijven exposure krijgen. Acht jaar geleden begonnen we met een leuk evenement waar Brouwerij 't IJ, Kesbeke, Brandt & Levie en Roetz-Bikes de eerste keurmerken kregen. Wij geloven in een stad waar consumenten, bedrijven én bezoekers lokaal inkopen zodat de lokale economie floreert. Gelukkig hebben we de wind mee want consumenten willen ook graag lokaal kopen vandaag de dag, maar ze weten de bedrijven nog niet altijd te vinden. Wij tonen die allemaal bij elkaar op één plek, vertellen de verhalen van de makers en dan krijgen mensen er een gevoel bij.’

*Hoe zorg je ervoor dat consumenten die verhalen horen?*

‘We hebben een goede website en actieve social kanalen, maar we kopen ook collectieve







## Amsterdam Made nominated at Coolest Dutch Brands

# 'We show what Amsterdam creators have to offer'

Amsterdam Made has been nominated at Coolest Brands 2024. The organisation helps sustainable manufacturing entrepreneurs from the Amsterdam region with extra exposure, media attention and it is also a seal of approval. Managing director Marit Timmerman explains how the small club is now going national.

**Marit Timmerman:** 'Amsterdam Made was founded following the example of San Francisco Made. That's a multimillion-dollar company with about 700 manufacturing companies affiliated to it. Amsterdam Made started eight years ago; at that time, the City of Amsterdam wanted to introduce a hallmark of beautiful things made in the city. From that idea, 'Amsterdam Made' was born: we show what Amsterdam's makers have to offer. Our organisation is quite different from the version in the US, though; there, for example, you have a huge sponsor culture, but not here. Levi Strauss alone largely pulls the cart over there.'

### seal of approval with substance

#### What is your mission?

'We want to make consumers aware that you can buy high-quality products just around the corner. Our hallmark stands for locally produced with as many homegrown ingredients as possible, the most sustainable production process possible, and creativity and craftsmanship. We issue that hallmark and make sure all these fine businesses get exposure. Eight years ago, we

started with a fun event where Brewery 't IJ, Kesbeke, Brandt & Levie and Roetz-Bikes got the first hallmarks. We believe in a city where consumers, businesses and visitors buy locally so that the local economy flourishes. Fortunately, we have the wind in our sails because consumers also like to buy local these days, but they don't always know where to find the businesses. We show them all together in one place, tell the stories of the makers and then people get a feel for them.'

#### How do you make sure consumers hear those stories?

'We have a good website and active social channels, but we also buy collective advertising space from online and offline media, such as Parool. With these, we have a sharp deal. For instance, we give five jewellery makers space to tell their story and we divide the amount we pay Parool by five; then suddenly it is feasible for them. We also send out press releases and make newsletters.'

### valuable collaborations

#### What role does sustainability play in your business model?

'Every application to become part of Amsterdam Made as a manufacturing company is assessed by our jury. They assess whether you make a high-quality product, produce sustainably and whether this takes place locally, within our national borders. The jury consists of seven professionals and they ensure that only truly sustainable companies join.'

#### What else does your marketing programme look like?

'We regularly run ads on bus shelters, pillars and in magazines. A few times a year we do a targeted online campaign. The last one, for instance, came about when Economic Affairs Councilor Sofyan Mbarki visited us. He told us that in his view, companies that have become big in the city should give something back to the city. We got some of our successful affiliated creators to speak in a campaign in which they tell us that they have lovingly become sponsors of us, so that we can use that money to help new start-up creators. By the way, they also have that sponsor role in a metaphorical sense because they also pass on their



knowledge to those smaller companies through networking events. In addition, we are a valuable community because we also link our partners to the makers. Think of agencies that help with a new brand identity, a green printing company or a trademark lawyer. We thereby bring about valuable collaborations.'

*Can you tell a bit more about a marketing campaign that was successful?*

'On our website, you see all kinds of products from affiliated makers, and as soon as you click on them, you are taken to that maker's own webshop. That works well for the makers, they normally have to give in a lot of margin at the middleman. We made a great campaign about that with the message for consumers: if you look on the Amsterdam Made website, that's great for you, good for the maker and great for the city! That campaign did well.'

### Locally Made

#### Has anything ever gone wrong?

'We find it frustrating that direct mails are sometimes poorly read because everyone is too busy. We had sent a mailing to makers in the south in early February and they all turned out to be carnivals. That's how things sometimes go wrong.'

#### That brings us straight to your growth ambition. It works so well in Amsterdam that you want to roll it out in more municipalities?

'We have a lot of reach and growing brand awareness and now we want to continue the success of Amsterdam Made in the rest of the country. So we came up with 'Locally Made'. Under that name, we also want to put other cities on the map, because just as much beauty is made there.'

### something in between

#### Who are your competitors?

'We are not a webshop, nor a PR agency, nor a professional association, but something in between all that. We don't have any direct competitors and that has the advantage that you don't

get in anyone's way, but we do have to find out everything ourselves. In Utrecht, for instance, you will come across a shop with local products and online there are similar platforms, but focused on a specific sector. We can actually support and complement those initiatives. We are really there for the good cause, a bit idealistic. Our challenge now is to find an investor or partner to expand properly in the Netherlands. Ultimately, that would be a very good thing for the manufacturing sector as well as consumers across the country.'

#### How is your turnover doing?

'We are a small, growing company. We work with four permanent people and we all look forward to the new developments, but with growth steps you are always short of resources. We would like to have a bit more momentum there. That's where that investor comes in again. We now have a steady base in Amsterdam and we're all set for the next step!'

*Partners Coolest Dutch Brands 2024: MassiveMusic, Ruwer, Dentsu Creative Amsterdam*

### This is what Amsterdam Made stands for

Amsterdam Made is a not-for-profit foundation. It is a hallmark for manufacturing companies that work in a sustainable and high-quality manner. For 29 euros a month, if you meet the conditions, you can get this quality mark and extra exposure. It is also possible to become a partner if your company can support local makers. Following the example of Amsterdam Made, Locally Made was also founded.

### About Coolest Dutch Brands 2024

Every year, the editors of Fonk Magazine select 12 originally Dutch brands to be considered for the title Coolest Dutch Brand of the Year. The nominated brands pursue sustainability, each in their own way. In the year of their nomination, they are positively visible in the media because of their (innovative) product and/or service and demonstrably know how to attract a broad audience. Previously nominated in 2024: Cal Love. Johnny Cashew and today: Amsterdam Made.