

# PX



Bas Offers,  
COO - PX

**Industry:** Media, Marketing

**Mission statement:** "PX is the world's first transparent customer acquisition platform, providing a single marketplace to acquire customers from hundreds of sources."

**Headquarters:** NYC

**Founded:** 2016

PX is a digital acquisition platform that connects marketers with prospective customers in real time.

Founded in 2010 by online media experts, Frans van Hulle and Bas Offers, PX provides a single marketplace for companies to acquire new customers from vetted sources.

"It's basically a data transaction that's being handed off within a matter of seconds, all on an auction-based online marketplace," says Bas Offers, COO and Co-Founder of PX.

Nearly a decade after launching, the company has four offices – New York, Amsterdam, Almere (NL), Panama City (Panama) and Odessa (Ukraine) – and over 70 employees.

We recently sat down with Bas to discuss PX's expansion strategy, ask about his experience of setting up a New York-based company as a Dutch entrepreneur and see if he has any advice for aspiring start-ups looking to jump across the pond.

Key takeaways:

- You cannot focus on and properly manage the U.S. market from the outside
- Consider the East Coast primarily for your move, it's an easier flight and distance from Holland. If not, Austin, Texas on the West Coast could be a potentially food option
- The difference in population size creates a lot of opportunities in the U.S., the market is huge. This also means that companies are forced to narrow down their service offerings and make them more specific
- People in New York love working with Dutch people and appreciate them a lot
- Everything is face-to-face in the U.S.; you have to build a story with prospective clients in the U.S. much more than in Holland
- Americans are very polite and will show a lot of enthusiasm about your product, however that doesn't always translate into deals

### Getting started in New York

PX is currently headquartered on Wall Street, the cornerstone of New York's financial district. For the Dutch – and Bas Offers – the location holds a historical significance.

Going back to when New York was called New Amsterdam in the 17th century, Wall Street's name comes from the city's fortification that Dutch settlers used to protect themselves from attacks.

Whilst a lot may have changed on Wall Street since those days, Bas's office is defined by a print of Jan Asselijn's 1650 painting The Threatened Swan, paying an ode to the Golden Ages of Dutch Entrepreneurship.

Today, PX are part of a new wave of technology and innovation start-ups who are increasingly looking towards New York as a base for their North American operations.

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### Why choose New York over other U.S. states?

The reason PX was set up in New York was simple. Bas was already there. After a three year stint as Senior Online Marketing Manager, for a Dutch company which was eventually acquired by Sony, he began PX from his bedroom.

It was no coincidence however that he ended up in New York. Beyond the “amazing talent” and networking opportunities, the city is according to Bas, “the epicenter for digital advertising”.

As PX's soul focus was on the North American markets from the very beginning, New York was the obvious option.

“You have to be in the U.S. You cannot focus on the U.S. market and manage that from a Dutch office.”

PX always knew that it would too have a European team one day, making setting up in New York “time-zone wise”. “There's a couple other places

that would have been relevant for us – on the West Coast and maybe even Austin, Texas – but the distance with Holland would have been too great.”

Amsterdam is six hours in front of New York, which makes it possible to communicate within the same working day, a huge advantage for trans-Atlantic offices.

In 2013, when PX expanded the opposite way across the Atlantic, Bas chose his previous home town of Almere as an office for European operations.

“We basically made the reverse track over the ocean.”

### American growth; “The U.S. market is just so massive”

The United States is one of the most populous countries in the world. With over 320 million people, even the most obscure sectors are made up of far more potential clients than any country across Europe. According to Bas, this means that in the U.S. “even the niche markets are massive”.

He gives an example; “There's 1000 insurance companies in the U.S. That means there's more than 100,000 insurance agents in the U.S.” In The Netherlands, that's over 0.5% of the total population of the country – where there's approximately only 60 health insurance companies.

The difference in population size creates a land of opportunities in the U.S. “I think that people really don't realize that until they actually make it over here. It's very hard to imagine how big that market really is and what the potentials are, until you are really deep into it.”

However, it also means that companies who are going to take on the task of servicing the U.S. market should get more specific and narrow down their service offering.

Currently, PX focuses solely on three sectors; home improvement and services, the insurance sector and the lending sector. Bas tells us that they're now looking to begin operating within more niche sectors within their current home services offering.

“For example we've just opened up a bathroom remodeling, kitchen remodeling and we're now looking at windows. Even these types of markets are pretty massive in the U.S... lead generation for window replacement is massive. It's bigger than even some of the biggest vertical ends in Holland.”

Whereas in smaller European countries, a more horizontal offering is necessary to gain traction in an industry, by keeping their sights set on specific targets, start-ups moving to the U.S. should, according to Bas, gain ownership of their niche market before moving onto the next.

### If you could give some advice to Dutch entrepreneurs considering the New York area, what would you tell them?

“Generally speaking, people in New York – and especially investors – love working with Dutch people. I really think it’s a big thing. Dutch history in New York is always been referenced to... and I think Dutch people are very much appreciated in the business culture in the U.S.”

However Bas believes that the cultural differences between the two countries are much bigger than most people realize. He touches on some concepts which will help aspiring start-ups navigate in the U.S. milieu.

### Building relationships in person

“Everything is face-to-face here. It’s all about building a connection and content around that connection. You have to build a story with prospective clients in the U.S., much more so than in Holland.”

“So in other words, just selling your service and explain what it does isn’t enough. Here, it’s really about the story around the service, that you have to relay very accurately and in your constant messaging, which is very different than in Holland.”

“The personal aspect is key. There’s so many calls, emails, etc., that you’ve just got to be in front of that person. Even more than in Holland because of that cultural difference.”

### American politeness

“That’s one of the hardest things you’ll see with Americans. They’re so polite, even when they know they’re never going to use your service.”

“In Holland, people are just way more straight-forward. They’ll just say that it’s unfortunate but they’re just not that interested.”

“If you come here, you’ll think ‘my product is fantastic and I’m going to rule the world’ because of this attitude. However, it only works if you actually sign those deals. That’s really hard and I still face that on a daily basis.”

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PX team

### Keeping the same culture on both sides of the pond

“I’ve heard of a lot of Dutch entrepreneurs that made the trek over here. They’ve seen their Dutch company change whilst they focused on building the same culture in their American company.”

“And in the U.S. it’s very difficult to communicate company values, much more so than in Holland. It’s super hard to build a culture.”

“[The move] has a really big impact. So you have to embrace the different cultures across countries and accept the fact that crossing the pond creates a new company culture. Communicating that within the office has to be a priority.”

### How can you manage this?

“Having a co-founder stay behind or very senior people on the other side that share the same values as you definitely helps.”

“I’ve seen companies which have two founders. One stayed in Holland, and the other one really comes to the U.S. to build it out. In my eyes, this is really the only way to go.”

“You have to go for it one hundred and fifty percent, because otherwise you’re never going to survive.”