How to stay NEGATIVE When Everybody Tests POSITIVE?
THE PROJECT TEAM AT SURF

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Our COVID Journey

30-DAY CRISIS

in this phase we found ourselves in a crisis situation, we had 30 days from the first phone call to deliver a distribution network capable of delivering an estimated 500,000 self-test a week.

PRODUCTION

After the initial general availability of the platform and after all short-cuts we took we needed to tidy up the logistic processes and focus on the legitimacy of the procurement processes.

THE LONG HAUL

This phase was characterised by politics and doubt since the number of infections after the summer was relatively low.

END OF LINE

Since running a distribution platform of self-tests is not the core-business of an NREN we tried to wind down the operations but reality kicked in by increasing number of infections, and various scenarios of the Ministry of Education.
Spring 2021, How to Re-Open the Universities and Schools?

- **The Plan**
  - Students and staff need to perform a COVID19 self-test twice a week
  - Over 50 Millions of these tests were ordered by Ministry of Health
  - Bi-weekly distribution to all campus/school locations

- **However**
  - Logistic challenges in handing out the Self-Test at the campus locations → Administration, large concentration of people, discipline to return home (to test or after positive test?)
  - Self-Test ordered not in stock, amount and brand yet unknown

- **To Sum Up →** A great plan but a bad idea...
UNEXPECTED JOURNEY

Inter-departmental Postal Service
Different approach

- Distribute the COVID19 Self-Test directly to the homes of the students and staff
- Make it an On-Demand process → Simple Order Process (web shop, but way more simple)
- For Students & Staff Only → federated identity management
- Safeguard security, privacy, scalability but also legality
- All the characteristics of an exciting start-up company

“Of one more thing, you have 30 days from now”
Develop a **Web portal** to place order for tests kit, students and staff only (closed user group)

- Procure the outsourcing of the **e-fulfilment, logistics and distribution**
- Establish the help desk or **customer service** because things will go wrong (reputation management)
- **Governing** of the entire process – managing the chain
- While (not) managing **lots of unknowns**
  - No numbers on the willingness of those 1.6M students and staff to order the tests → 2x week testing → results in 2M tests a week
  - This high uncertainty and risk aversion due to politics very difficult to make decisions
# Distribution (potentially)

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<th>Amount of Self-Tests:</th>
<th>1.400.000</th>
<th>2.000.000</th>
<th>1.500.000</th>
<th>2.000.000</th>
<th>2.000.000</th>
<th>2.000.000</th>
<th>2.000.000</th>
<th>12.900.000</th>
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</table>

## Distribution Mailbox + Track & Trace

- 4 Self-Test per Order
- 8 Self-Test per Order is possible

<table>
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<th># per Order</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sequence</th>
<th>Weeknr</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21/06/2021</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Weeks

- **Mother's Day**: 100,000
- **Ascension**: 500,000
- **Whitsun**: 1.500.000
- **300.000**: 500,000
- **300.000**: 400,000
- **300.000**: 300,000
- **300.000**: 300,000
- **300.000**: 300,000
- **8 Self-Test per Order is possible**

### 30-Day Crisis

Prepare for Maximum Capacity and Cost
After Launch we needed to tidy up the process, clean-up the short-cuts

- Legality of all suppliers and proper tender process
- Reduce the Back-log items Portal development
- Efficient Customer Service & Care (staff of 10)
- Provisioning; expectations vs reality

- Recoupment of previous decisions based on too little data
- Pitfall M&M’s → Multiple disciplines, More people, Mean Management

PRODUCTION PHASE

LAUNCH WEEK 132,594 ORDERS / 530,376 TESTS MAILED
Theory: short term (one-shot) project for 2 months

Reality: Full year service, working too good. It is hard not to continue

- More and more real professionals in-place
- Strategic attention replaced by operational service and expertise
- Logistic challenges under control and streamlined work processes

However

- Recurring COVID in waves
- Less and less an NREN service
THE LONG HAUL

First Order
Second
Third
Fourth
Fifth
Sixth
Seventh or more

Lies, damn lies and statistics
Multiple tries to really quit the project, but we failed miserably due to
- Risico aversion (politics) – what to do with the next wave?
- No plan (policy) – what to do with the next wave?
- Simply too good (operations) – if it works don’t kill it?
LESSONS LEARNED

WELL POSITIONED
If you can link it to your mission as NREN, then you are like a spider in a web. Everything can be made: Although you are not a logistics expert, you can play a role in this, but remember that you can be tied down for a long time.
LESSONS LEARNED

MAKE DECISIONS BASED ON TOO LITTLE INFORMATION

In crisis, one must learn to make decisions which will hit you in the face hard later on, be prepared to solve them (later)
LESSONS LEARNED

Crisis: agile, have to let go of other work, 200% commitment, fierce growth

Production: tweakers, improve, pruning, consolidate

Long-haul: regular professionals (boring...)

End-of-line: kill your darlings when the stopping gets tough

EACH PHASE IS DIFFERENT

Other dynamics, different kind of people & expertise needed (also applies to other projects and situations, you need this as NREN organisation)
Driving innovation together