

'Auctioning is sustainable and we go about it in a slightly different way'



Photo: Ghislaine Duijmelings, Managing Director, Surplex.

The Dutch Magazine Economie Durrzaamheid Educatie (Education for Economic Sustainability Magazine) – When it comes to an auction house, one usually thinks of antiques, or moveables being sold due to bankruptcy. As far as Surplex CEO Ghislaine Duijmelings is concerned, we need to update this image very quickly. She manages the international auction company, which has branches in 14 countries and specialises in the field of industrial machines.

'You see that it is already becoming more popular in auctions within the buyer's market. And in the case of B2B auctions, bankruptcies often come to mind. More and more companies have other reasons for deliberately deciding on this type of sales method', says [Ghislaine Duijmelings](#). She manages [Surplex](#) from Düsseldorf (Germany), and the company also has an office in Breukelen, the Netherlands. Via the website, you can primarily find [metal](#) and [woodworking machines](#) that can be purchased via auction, as well as robots, machines for the agricultural, food and plastics sectors, and construction and earth-moving machines, such as compressors, fork-lift trucks and warehouse equipment. For the sellers, this means that they can part with surplus machines at a good price. Such as in

situations where the machines will be replaced, or because the company discontinues a specific type of operation. 'This gives the buyer the opportunity to obtain good machines at a more advantageous price than if they were new', says Duijmelings. 'This is because they are still in good condition and can remain operational for a long time. A good machine can last for many more years.'

Bringing buyers and sellers together

Here, Surplex brings buyers and sellers together. This means that buyers find a complete and international offering of machines in one place. 'With the seller, we first assess the machines to determine a good value. On behalf of the sellers, we inventory the machines thoroughly. This involves providing descriptions, maintenance history, inspection reports, photos and other relevant documentation. Sometimes a machine is divided into several parcels, as that is better for selling purposes', continues Ghislaine. The photo content is important for the buyer, who often must determine remotely whether the machine would benefit them, and if the price is suitable. That is the difference nowadays. 'We have a lot of potential buyers throughout the world, and they know what they are looking for. A local dealer does not have that.' It is very clear to us that businesses are becoming more familiar with the B2B auctions phenomenon. 'The buyer pays the market price and Surplex receives payment based on the seller and buyer commission. It's a transparent process.'

The idea that the buyer has to resolve everything themselves after they have made the purchase is also outdated as far as Duijmelings is concerned. 'We provide our services through maintaining contact with every buyer regarding the dismantling, transport, and export and import of the machine. This often involves a lot of searching, and as an international company we have a lot of experience with that.'

Up and running in less time

Nowadays Duijmelings, who incidentally has considerable experience in the auction world, finds that the process in particular is advantageous. 'The prices of raw materials such as wood and metal are rising rather quickly. They are sometimes difficult to come by and that translates into higher costs and longer delivery times for new machines. If you buy a machine through an auction, then it is usually quite advantageous.' Surplex has also grown over the course of the past year. The company, originally founded in Germany, has a friendly, informal work environment and is devoted to providing service. Duijmelings: 'We want to be regular and reliable partners for our customers.'

The Dutch branch has been active since April 2020 and already has several profitable auctions to show for it. One example was the copper foundry LDM in

Drunen, which had to cease business activity due to developments in copper prices. But there aren't that many copper foundries in Europe, and the company had unique – and large – machines for sale. The challenge for us was to find good buyers. We succeeded at this thanks to our global network. In this way, we helped this company close down, which of course is never a pleasant experience. And that is something that we are hearing more often: the customers are surprised that an auction brings in so much money.'

And this is what makes auctions so advantageous – in the case of industrial machines as well, such as those sold by Surplex. The buyer can find a good machine for many uses, one that can quickly be up and running, and at a good price as well. The seller receives a good price for their surplus or replaced equipment. That sounds like a win-win situation. 'Through our approach we also provide dealers, as potential buyers, ample support and maintenance. This market standard may become more well-known', concludes Duijmelings.

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