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## The grass is greener

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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 



# business digest.

Innovators and news from around the globe

## Pushing the boat out

Belgian entrepreneur Matty Zadnikar's new business soothes the headaches – and huge financial burden – that come with owning a yacht



PHOTO: PHILIPPE HELLUYS

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atty Zadnikar was so obsessed with boats as a child, his mother threatened to get him a shrink.

"When I was 10, I told her the day would come that I'd own a yacht," the Belgian chuckles. "She told me I was crazy – that yachts were for rich people – not us."

The family came from a humble, coal mining background, the industry Zadnikar originally specialised in. Yet, his love for sailing never wavered, and – following the huge success of industrial safety services business Z-Safety, which Zadnikar started in 1994 – the entrepreneur was finally able to join the elite yacht club by purchasing his own – and prove his mother wrong.

While thrilled to be fulfilling his passion, it was also during this time that Zadnikar realised the frustrations that came with owning a boat. "I started to wonder why

nobody had thought about configuring a luxury yacht; having two to four owners and then having an objective third company to take care of all the headaches." So, in 2016 – a couple of years after selling Z-Safety – the Belgian launched shared yacht ownership company SeaNet.

Taking the financial sting out of purchasing a big vessel outright, the company allows you to co-own your dream boat (you can choose between a 25%, 33%, 50% or 75% stake) and hand over the day-to-day management to SeaNet. This means that some of the most time-consuming and costly elements of yacht ownership – crew management, maintenance, insurance – are taken care of, leaving clients free to simply head for the open seas. Exactly when you get to sail is decided on a rotation basis with co-owners taking turns. "No one gets

100% of the freedom because no one is paying for 100% of the freedom," Zadnikar says. "The upside is that you could save 75% of the boat costs you'd normally be spending – equating to millions – and can do as you wish with that extra money."

To test the scheme – and prove just how much he believes in yacht co-ownership – the first vessel available with SeaNet is Zadnikar's own boat, and the Belgian is one of the co-sharers. A second yacht will be available from next May. The dream is then to eventually have a fleet of five yachts, moored in different locations, with owners able to swap. "I believe there is a market for a new type of boat owner who says 'OK, now I can own a fully managed boat for a fraction of the cost'," Zadnikar says. "My job is to bring those people together, and ensure they all have a five-star sailing experience."  
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