

Harald Hagenaars

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Veldhoven, The Netherlands



Strategic technologist and entrepreneur with a career-long mastery of bridging complex software engineering with high-level business architecture to drive enterprise growth.

Proven leader in scaling deep-tech startups and orchestrating digital transformations, specializing in the seamless integration of AI, robotics, and Digital Twin ecosystems into viable market solutions.

Multilingual C-level partner who leverages analytical rigor and a "corporate startup" mindset to translate technical innovation into sustainable, high-ROI business models.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

1. **Strategic Business Innovation:** Business Model Development, Go-To-Market Strategy, Corporate Startup Methodologies, Strategic Account Management, Financial Frameworking
2. **AI & Advanced Technical Architecture:** Generative AI & Agents, Robotics & Automation, Computer Vision, Systems Thinking, Cloud & Data Ecosystems, Digital Twins, Full-Stack Development
3. **Leadership & Ecosystem Orchestration:** C-level & Stakeholder Engagement, Cross-functional Team Leadership, IP Strategy, Global Partner Management

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Commercial Innovation & R&D Funding:** Led complex RFQ responses for **global automotive OEMs and Tier-1/2 partners**, securing high-value contracts that directly funded the establishment of a **dedicated AI research hub** for autonomous driving and ADAS technologies.
- **Venture Creation & Capital Strategy:** Co-founded and scaled a deep-tech startup in mobile robotics, securing **€7M in funding over three years** and establishing a major international technology firm as a lead strategic investor.
- **Strategic Growth & Transformation:** Orchestrated a high-stakes **business pivot for a European deep-tech venture** and defined **8 core growth strategies** for a logistics software provider to reverse revenue stagnation and modernize their digital roadmap.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Diractions Consulting, Veldhoven
Owner / Consultant

Jan 2023 -

- **Strategic Tech Roadmap & GTM Execution:** Orchestrated digital transformation and Go-To-Market strategies for diverse sectors, including travel, automotive, and fleet

management; integrated AI agents, geospatial intelligence, and graph databases to enhance user experience and drive revenue growth.

- **Cross-Sector Innovation Management:** Spearheaded high-impact R&D initiatives, from managing the technical core of tele-operated robots in healthcare and education to securing university consortia partners for ethical AI (ELSA Lab) and autonomous mobility research.
- **Market Intelligence & Strategic Expansion:** Conducted complex global market analyses and SWOT evaluations to facilitate international expansion (Japan/Europe) and joint ventures; provided executive-level insights on L4+ autonomous driving systems and HD mapping for industry leaders.

AI in Motion, Eindhoven

Feb 2019 – Jan 2023

Co-Founder

- **Venture Leadership & Strategic Growth:** Co-founded a deep-tech robotics startup, securing lead investment from Navinfo Europe and aligning long-term IP and AI roadmaps with investor interests and commercial funding rounds.
- **Product-Market Fit & GTM Execution:** Translated complex technical capabilities, including sensor fusion, SLAM, and perception, into actionable product features for AGV/AMR platforms, successfully qualifying pilot customers and prioritizing high-potential verticals.
- **Team Building & Technical Oversight:** Scaled the initial engineering and product organization from the ground up; hired and coached the core technical team while overseeing the scoping of perception, mapping, and autonomous navigation technologies.

Navinfo Europe, Eindhoven & Beijing

Jan 2018 – Dec 2021

Director Corporate Development Europe

- **Corporate Development & Portfolio Governance:** Spearheaded the corporate development function, establishing the governance models and lean startup methodologies used to manage a high-tech innovation portfolio spanning AI perception, LiDAR, and next-gen automotive chipsets.
- **Strategic Investment & Venture Incubation:** Orchestrated end-to-end technical and commercial due diligence for spin-offs and acquisitions; notably co-founded *AI in Motion* as a venture-backed deep-tech startup and secured alignment between European innovation hubs and Chinese investment stakeholders.
- **Multidisciplinary & Global Leadership:** Led and coached a distributed, cross-functional team of 6 FTE (including Strategy, BD, and Product Managers) across Europe and Asia, bridging the gap between technical risk assessment and executive-level strategic outcomes.

Summary of career foundation, Eindhoven
From software engineer to innovation manager

1994 – 2017

- **Built a foundation in embedded software**, real-time systems, and connected navigation platforms (Philips, High Tech Automation, Siemens VDO Automotive), evolving from software architect to product manager for OEM and aftermarket mobility services.
- **Founded Allocations, delivering consulting** in geodata aggregation and location-based services to public and private clients, and supported the spin-up of a Siemens VDO management buyout called Mapscape through strategic planning and early business development.
- **At Mapscape, led business development and innovation programs** — translating OEM requirements into solutions, launching AI and data-driven initiatives (autonomous driving, crowdsourced data), and co-founding the AI research lab that seeded later Navinfo Europe ventures.

EDUCATION

Bachelor in Computer Science: Hogeschool Zuyd, 1989-1994

Diploma Electronics: MTS Maastricht, 1985-1989

Programming languages: Python, Javascript, Typescript

Computer software/ frameworks: Microsoft 365, Notion, Obsidian, VSCode, Cursor, Affinity, Davinci Resolve

Languages: Dutch (native), English (fluent), German (fluent)

Certificates & finished courses (LinkedIn Learning):

- The AI-Driven Product Designer, November 2025
- Lean Six Sigma White Belt Certification (refresh), August 2025
- React Essential Training, August 2025
- Using AI in the Design to Full-Stack Development Lifecycle, July 2025
- Selling into Industries: Technology Companies (refresh), April 2021
- Strategic Planning Foundations (refresh), April 2021
- Creating a Unique Competitive Advantage, December 2020
- Your Product or Service Strategy Explained, November 2020

Certificates & finished courses (Hugging Face):

- Fundamentals of MCP, June 2025
- AI Agents Fundamentals, April 2025