

# Jacob Bossaer

is the CEO and founder of



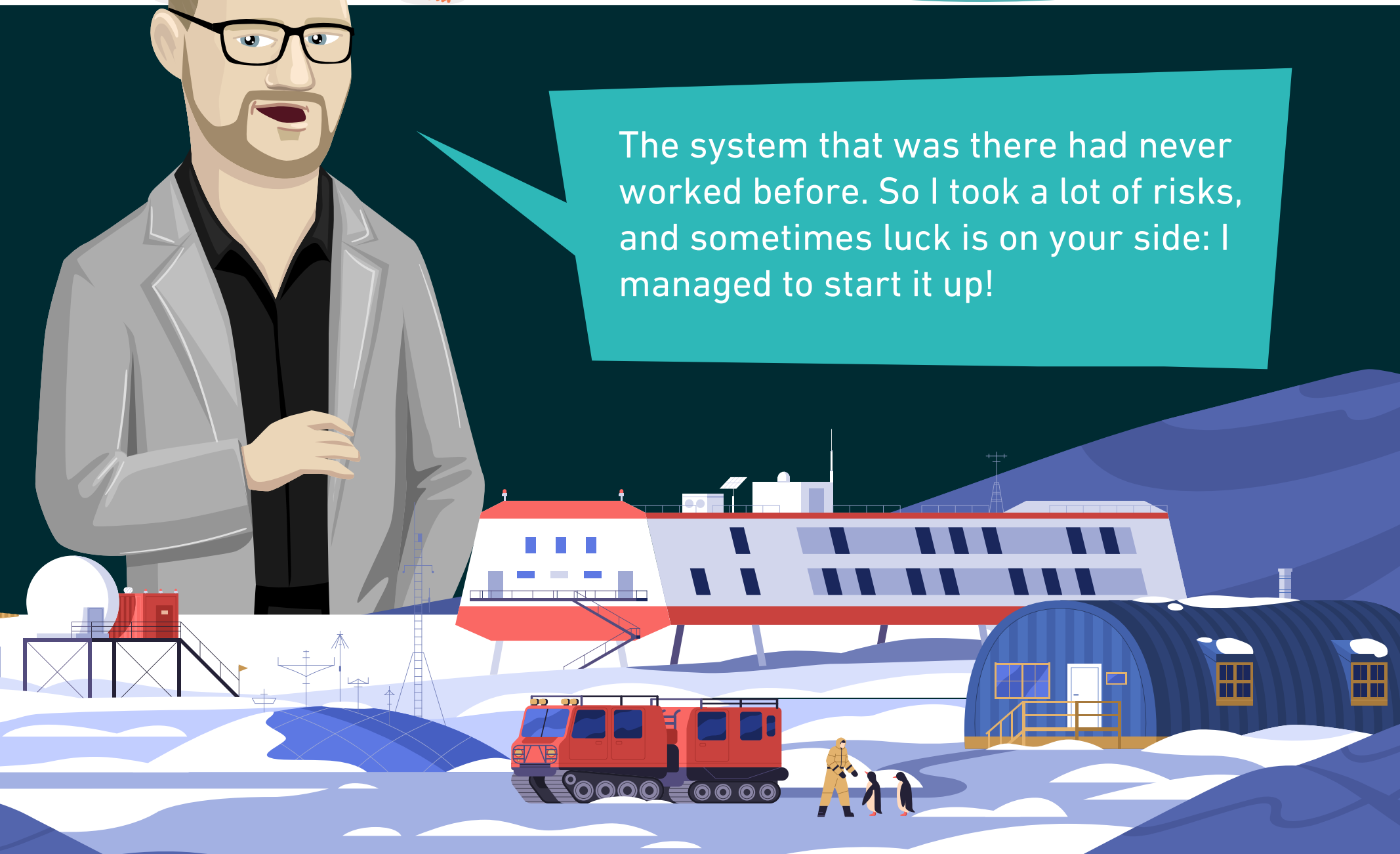
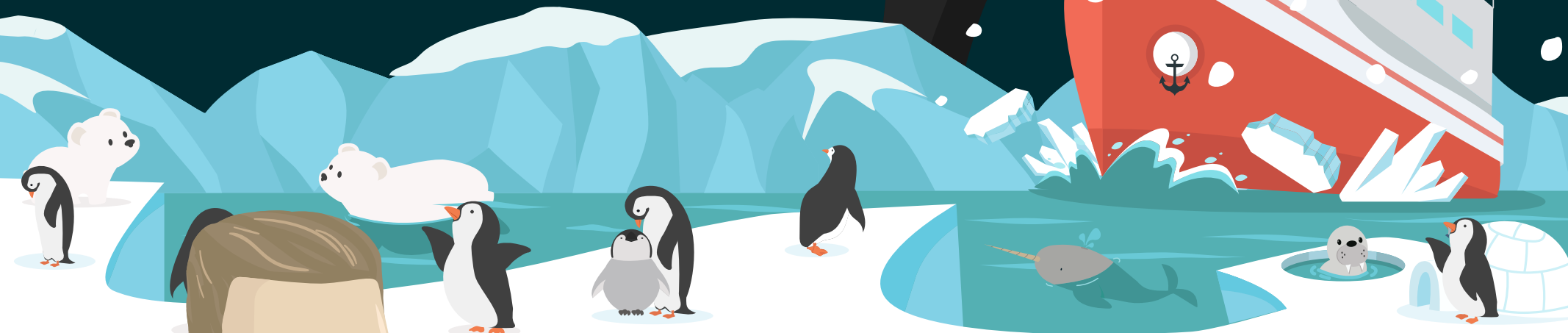
(DON'T!)  
**WASTE  
WATER**

**Is it possible to produce drinking water in a fully remote place?**

The Belgian scientific polar research station Princess Elisabeth is the first zero-emission base on the Antarctic.

Yet, from its commissioning in 2009 to Jacob's involvement as lead water engineer in 2011, the water-side of this recycling loop was still shaky.

The system that was there had never worked before. So I took a lot of risks, and sometimes luck is on your side: I managed to start it up!



**Jacob would keep returning to Antarctica each polar summer for a total of four scientific expeditions.**

(DON'T!)

**WASTE  
WATER**

**Yet, he felt that there was something even more significant to achieve.**

I was thinking, if you can recycle water in one of the most extreme environments in the world, you can do it anywhere!

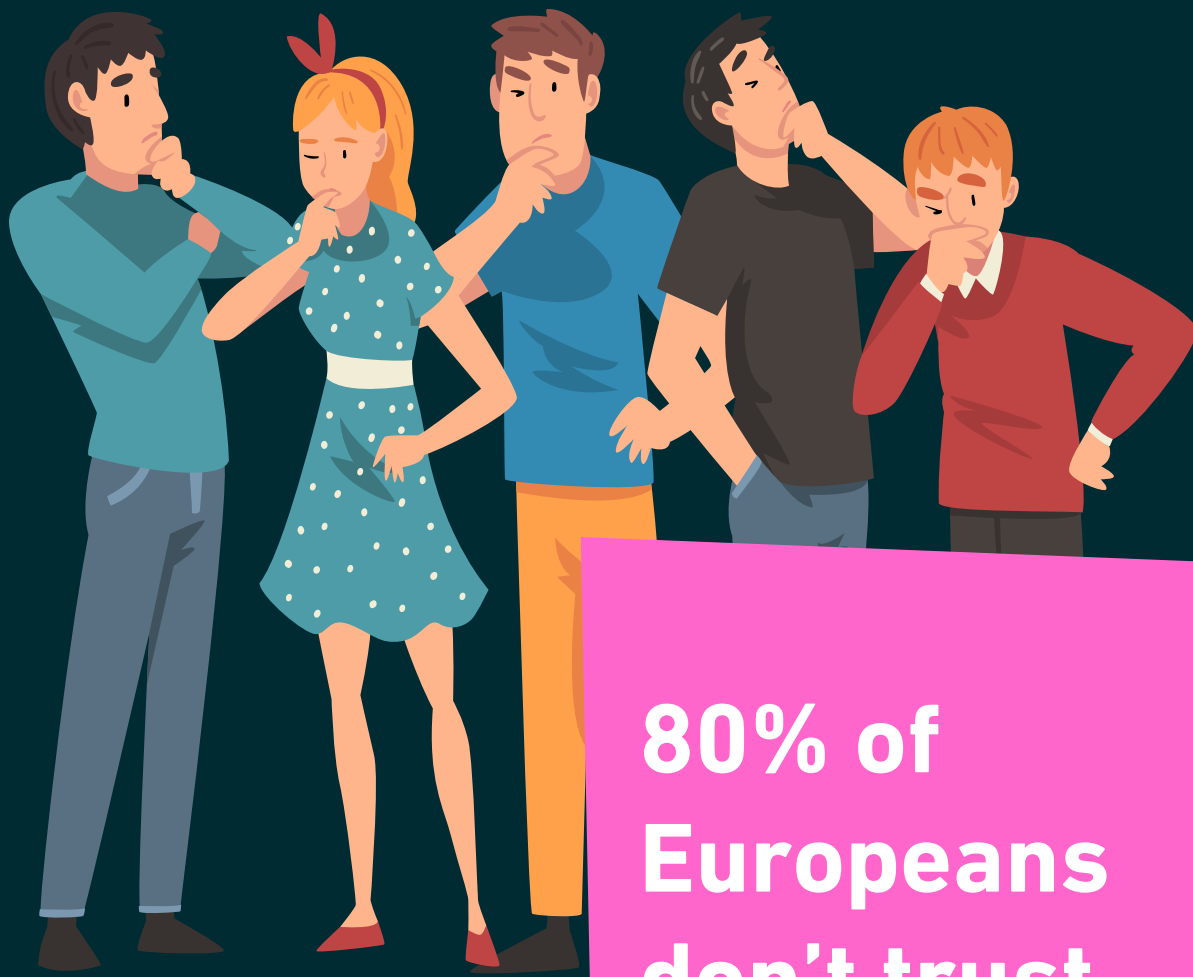
**And thus, he founded BOSAQ, together with Pieter Derboven.**

**Yet, if everybody needs drinking water, there are boundaries to overcome before entering the market.**

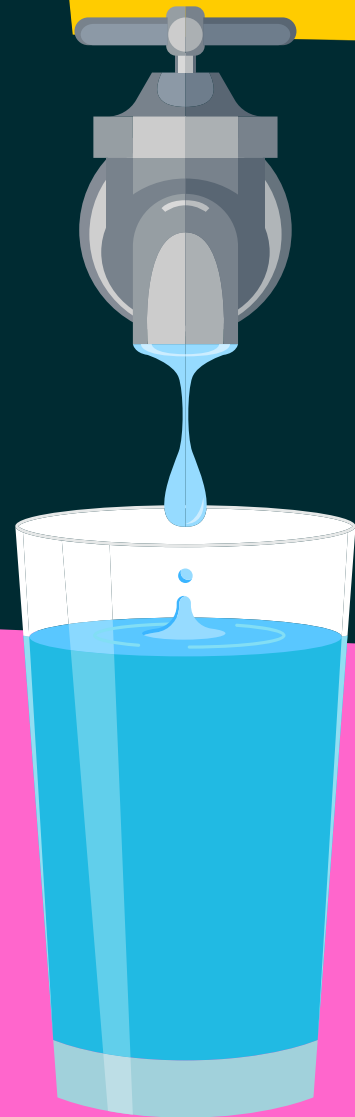
Drinking-Water is a very political product. Sure, your technology has to be good because you're working with public health. But what we sell is the idea of providing clean and safe drinking water in a sustainable way!



Now, you also have to overcome an immense challenge:



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**WASTE  
WATER**



**80% of  
Europeans  
don't trust  
water from  
the tap.**

**That perception has a lot to do with the bottled water's powerful marketing.**

This is why we coined the term “premium” to define the drinking water our systems produce. Of course, it's a marketing word, but it's to make people understand that “premium” is about the water quality, not about the (bottling) brand.



**In a world where 2.2 billion people lack access to drinking water, a company on a mission like BOSAQ has to aim for the largest possible impact.**



**... and this has direct consequences on the company's strategy.**



In three years and a half, we've been almost bankrupt three times. Not because we're doing wrong, just because we invested hugely in our growth.

(DON'T!)

**WASTE  
WATER**



**That's probably what it takes to cope with BOSAQ's ambition to become the world's n°1 in the decentralized drinking water supply!**

It's not being the biggest just to be the biggest. It's to have an impact! If we "only" supply 40 million people with drinking water, it's already 5% of the 850 million people who never have access to it.



Will Jacob reach his goal? We shall know in 15 years; the horizon he set for BOSAQ to become... a unicorn! No less.

(Given the challenge he aims to solve, don't we all wish him all the best?)

### **In this incredibly dense conversation, we also covered:**

- How a chemical engineer paradoxically came up with a fully physical solution
- How networking and teaming up is the only way to succeed as an entrepreneur
- How BOSAQ started with only a Business Plan and a Flemish Grant to cover six months of operational costs
- How the Bottling Industry is a transportation service - representing about 40% of its costs - and how BOSAQ proved an alternative to being better, for instance, at Tomorrowland
- The fascinating experiment BOSAQ enabled, where a restaurant's toilet and kitchen wastewaters are 100% recycled to be bottled and served back at the restaurant tables.
- How Jacob attempts to beat capitalism from the inside, and how he's embedded wanting to change the world for good in BOSAQ's DNA through the companies ten commandments.
- How from Day 1, BOSAQ committed to donate 10% of its profit to a foundation they created: Water Heroes.
- How dreaming is a duty as an entrepreneur - and you rather dream big!
- How even in the middle of the jungle, you have phone networks that you can leverage to automate your off-grid water treatments in the age of IoT
- How continuous operation and technology transfer is embedded in BOSAQ's approach from a contract's Day 1
- How the company produces water for 0.5 to 1.5€/m<sup>3</sup> today and envisions to soon take those numbers down to 0.3€/m<sup>3</sup> thanks to standardization and building for being big.
- ... and much more!

**Don't miss a single bite;  
check it out on [dww.show](http://dww.show)!**

