

### The Ardennes, they are doing just fine

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**It is a challenge on which André Offermans, CEO of Ardennes-Etape, has been working successfully for many years now: to enable holiday makers to discover the very best of the Belgian Ardennes, with a high-quality holiday cottage as a home base. Eleven years after the project took off he leads a team of 29. Together they manage the leading website for holiday home rental in the Belgian Ardennes.**

On 20 June the Ardennes-Etape website for the fourth time underwent a complete make-over. The goal remains unchanged: meet the needs and wishes of the holiday makers wanting to come to the Ardennes. It is the perfect moment to have a closer look at some of the key elements of this Stavelot based success story.

In 2000 André Offermans and his partner decide to launch an online platform for holiday cottage rental and as a means to promote the region of the Belgian Ardennes, to give it the attention it deserves. This method is exceptionally progressive. The internet is still in its infancy and all major players in the industry are still using mostly pen and paper.

The CEO of Ardennes-Etape concludes high-quality holiday cottages are the way to go. He works together with home owners for whom holiday maker satisfaction is the number one priority.

The principle is far from simple, but seems to be attracting more and more customers and more and more home owners as well.

The newest version of the Ardennes-Etape website is even more user-friendly than before and responds even better to the visitors' needs. It took more than twelve months to take the project from start to finish.

This fits perfectly into André Offermans's beliefs, being the constant improvement of his co-workers' skills and capabilities. It is a multidisciplinary team of experts that handled the project from start to finish. The end product is one hundred per cent 'made in the Ardennes'.

The brand new website still focuses on the photo material: now there are even more pictures and all of them are in large format and of exceptional quality. Thanks to the vast tourist information, holiday makers have all they need to correctly plan their holiday. Ardennes-Etape remains true to the original value of promoting this beautiful region.

A little extra for the website visitor: at the bottom of the page he finds the navigation toolbar, completely aimed at improving the online user experience.





*Que du bonheur !*

André Offermans is not, however, planning on leaving it at that. Business-Etape, an Ardennes-Etape spin-off, organises business seminars in the Belgian Ardennes and is establishing itself as an up to par asset to the company. Furthermore, before the end of this year several job offers will be sent out: 2 for ICT, 1 translator in German, 1 Marketing projects officer, 1 Client relations officer and 1 secretary for Business-Etape.

In times of crisis and constant bad economic news, the drive and fresh approach of Ardennes-Etape shows us that great things can be achieved with the right use of the talent available in the Ardennes region.

