It all started with an idea for how to build walls faster. Then, via a website for building products, they hit on the idea of websites for retailers. And that proved successful: their company is now well on its way, with a staff of 10 FTEs and 750 websites and web stores under its belt.

Jeroen Bongers is one of the company’s founders. He came up with a way to build walls faster while he was a student and decided to market it, but he did not have much luck. His next idea was to create a website for new building products. Together with Boechie van den Brand, a graduate of the Mathematics and Computer Science Department, he developed a website that reported new building products. But that did not take hold either.

Now they have Winkelparade and develop all sorts of online services for the retail industry. “Store owners can purchase a unique website or web store from us,” Bongers explains. “We also run an aggregate site called Winkelparade.nl where you can find all of the stores in the Netherlands. It contains the basic information for each store; if customers want to add more information or place an ad, then they have to pay for that.” The entrepreneurs are now working on introducing online shopping through the Winkelparade site. “That’s our next step,” says Bongers.

Five years from now:
“Winkelparade will be a big force in online and offline retail sales in the Netherlands. We can definitely see Winkelparade growing into one big shopping mall.”