



Interview: Xander Soldaat

By Hispabrick Magazine

Name: Xander Soldaat

Age: 35

Occupation: Infrastructure Architect/Sr Linux Project Engineer

Nationality: Dutch

How did you get involved in MINDSTORMS?

In February 2008 I bought my first NXT set. This wasn't my first robot and not my first LEGO® set. The NXT set marked an end to my 20 year dark age. Two months later I had bought the second set. Not long after that I started tinkering with home brew sensors and writing software to make those work. I had bought a HiTechnic IR Link sensor which I found to be unsupported by ROBOTC. I had an itch and it needed scratching. I started asking HT all sorts of questions and it wasn't long before I was asked to write drivers for the rest of their sensors. Thus was born the ROBOTC Driver Suite. I have since built up a good relationship with most of the sensor companies such as Mindsensors, Dexter Industries and Holit Data Systems. They support me and I write drivers for them. It's a great privilege to be able to work together with these people.

How do you contribute to the MINDSTORMS community?

I write and maintain a suite of ROBOTC based drivers for just about every sensor available for the NXT platform. I also do a lot of beta testing for new sensors and programming

environments like ROBOTC and NXC. I have good knowledge of sensors and I2C and am comfortable with electronics. I write tutorials and other documents that I publish on my own blog or NXTasy. I'm quite active on the various NXT related forums like The NXT Step, ROBOTC and NXTasy.

One of the things I enjoy most is going out to LEGO and robot-related events and showing people what the NXT is capable of. I helped some of my friends with the large LEGO High Bay Storage system that was built for LEGO World 2009 in Zwolle and later also in Copenhagen. I programmed and partially rebuilt one of the robot arms and helped build some of the other bits of it. Now I'm part of the MCP4 which allows me to promote the Mindstorms NXT platform in a more "official" capacity, with the support of LEGO. It's a real honour for me to have been selected to be part of this small group of people with such diverse talents.

[1] <http://mightor.wordpress.com/>

[2] <http://nxtasy.org/>

[3] <http://thenxtstep.com/smf/index.php>

[4] <http://www.robotc.net/forums/index.php>

[5] <http://forums.nxtasy.org/>

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