Sentences™ Case Study

Reuters eCruit

Reuters, the UK-headquartered global information, news and technology group, celebrates its 150th anniversary this year. Its web site www.reuters.com tells of the contributions of former staff such as thriller writer Frederick Forsyth, who used colour gathered during his stint in the news agency's Paris office as background to bestsellers like The Day Of The Jackal.

But if Forsyth was to apply for a job today, he would find his CV being processed electronically with help from UK software house Lazy Software's Associative Model of Data-based tool Sentences.

Late last year the UK Human Resources group re-established a central recruitment team after a ten-year gap to speed up the process of talent acquisition. The team soon found it needed a way to get the most effective use out of its resources.

"We needed a tracking system to get the best out of working with external agencies and the Internet based recruitment system. As a technology company we also wanted a technology answer", says Marion Wale, UK Talent Acquisitions Manager in Reuters UK's Human Resources organisation.

A solution was certainly needed urgently. "We were deluged with paper CVs and requests from managers for recruitment, particularly for editorial and technical positions" she says.

Apart from a way to end the paper chase, the firm wanted a tactical, quickly deployable system. Through a recent hire the company became aware of an application called eCruit, based on version 1.1 of the Sentences application development system from Lazy Software, which seemed fit for the purpose. The company was invited in to see if it could rapidly customise this system for Reuters' particular requirements.

"A big selling point was the speed of development" says Wale. "We wanted a system we could play with and find out how to use pretty quickly."

Starting just before Christmas 2000 Lazy Software staff met that challenge with a system up and running within ten working days. Two Lazy staff working in close liaison with members of Wale's team started work just before the holidays, finished in January 2001. Running via an ASP called GB Direct, the application sits on a Linux apache server in Bradford and is used by Reuters staff on PCs in its office near its main Fleet St HQ.

"The system has streamlined the processing of CVs and is helping to speed up our relationship management with potential employees. The next step is to deliver management reporting data to assess our time to hire and tell us where the hold ups are" says Wale. She adds eCruit is proving particularly helpful when answering candidates' queries on the status of their application, particularly for volume recruitment exercises. Finally, she cites its ease of use, economical price point, and 'painless' deployment as the three main factors in its favour.

Reuters thinks it wasn't at all 'lazy' to choose Sentences. "The word I use about this system is 'practical'" she stresses.