SmartRecruiters

FRASERS GROUP

The Goldilocks Zone:
How Frasers Group Automated High-Volume Hiring at a Human Pace with AI

Case Study

Getting the hiring process just right

In the fairy tale, "Goldilocks and the Three Bears," Goldilocks tastes three bowls of porridge, sits in three chairs, and tests three beds before choosing the one that's "just right." In building out its processes for seasonal high-volume retail hiring, Frasers Group applied the same principle of getting the process "just right" to meet the needs of hiring managers, HR, and candidates.

Adam Reynolds, Head of Talent at Frasers Group, described the company's journey to the hiring process redesign this way: "TA acted as a mediator between the competing factions of HR on one side, retail operations on the other, and candidates on the other. Each party had really strong cases and a genuine reason for their position."

The numbers and the needs of the business guided Frasers' next steps. "It just wasn't possible to get over a million applications down to 30,000 hires by reviewing every application," Adam said. "We needed to expedite the process, but we also needed to maintain the quality standards."

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By the numbers

- **1500+** retail stores in the UK

- **18** brands

- **10**-day time to hire for seasonal retail roles

- **1 million** applicants per year

- **30,000** hires per year

- **40%** of applicants from SmartCRM in the second year

Automation with a human touch

Automated workflows in SmartRecruiters and the AI-based candidate filtering tool SmartAssistant helped Frasers Group streamline hiring. "SmartAssistant gives us a systematic, automated method of sifting and selecting to create an over-indexed shortlist of pre-qualified candidates that our stores can use to get people booked in for interviews," Adam said.

Pre-hire assessments, SLAs with hiring managers, automated interview scheduling, templated communications, and 48-hour windows for moving people forward allowed the team to reduce the hiring process to just 10 days. Not faster, not slower, but in the Goldilocks Zone: just right.

Adam Reynolds
Head of Talent, Frasers Group

"We had to make peace with some level of attrition at every single stage," Adam said. "It's critical to help applicants move at pace through the recruitment process and give them as little time as possible to find alternative options while balancing our need for efficient and purposeful interviews."

While hiring managers may have wanted their selected candidates to start immediately, the team found that it could not force candidates to make a decision too quickly. "We need to give them that time to reflect, that human time to think about the job before they start," Adam said. It turned out that the Goldilocks Zone for offer to start was 72 hours for seasonal retail roles.
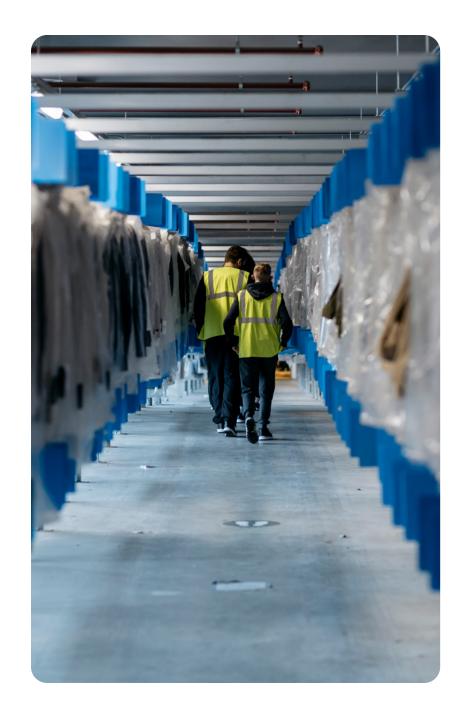
Results improve with time

The first year with SmartRecruiters built confidence in the business. "Getting people to the shop floor quicker meant that commercially, we could hit our targets," Adam said. "And the fast smooth process positively impacted our EVP."

In the second year, SmartCRM helped Frasers Group find a new Goldilocks Zone. That year, 40% of hires came from candidates already in the CRM, the time to hire dropped below 10 days, and the cost per hire dropped to below 60 British pounds. As Frasers Group looks to the future, they aim to use SmartCRM across all retail to achieve 50% of total seasonal hires by CRM and 25% across salaried roles.

Adam offered sage advice for those wanting to automate while maintaining quality. "Understand the delicate balance between application speed and data collection. Know your ratios and regularly review them," he advised.

If there's a Goldilocks Zone to sum up automation for talent acquisition, perhaps it's this: "There is a sweet spot between automation of communication and being systematic and robotic," Adam said. "People want to feel like they've been spoken to by a human and taken into consideration." That sounds just right to us.

About SmartRecruiters

SmartRecruiters

HIRING WITHOUT BOUNDARIES™

SmartRecruiters enables Hiring Without Boundaries™ by freeing talent acquisition teams from legacy applicant tracking software. SmartRecruiters' next-generation platform serves as the hiring operating system for 4,000 customers like Bosch, LinkedIn, Skechers, and Visa. Companies with business-critical hiring needs turn to SmartRecruiters for best-of-breed functionality, world-class support, and a robust ecosystem of third-party applications and service providers.

See SmartRecruiters in action