



Customer insight

Improved ability to communicate with candidates enhances Sonae Sierra's employer brand





# improved

communication enhances  
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Sonae Sierra's recruitment requirements span roles from operations to IT, marketing and maintenance. All job applications used to be received by post or email. When there was a job vacancy, candidates would be recorded and managed using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets; but there was no system for recording, considering or even acknowledging applications sent in speculatively, rather than as a response to a specific vacancy.

This manual and ad-hoc candidate management process made identifying good candidates time-consuming and risked suitable candidates being overlooked. Nor did it allow Sonae Sierra to generate reports that show, for example, the status of a vacancy or the time taken to hire.

"Without a master source of applicant information it was hard to work efficiently," explains Catarina Oliveira, HR Manager at Sonae Sierra. "In addition we were not meeting candidates' expectations of being able to apply for vacancies online. So we needed to implement a recruitment tool that would streamline the process for both applicants and the HR team."

## Setting the scene

Sonae Sierra is a shopping centre specialist with an integrated approach to its business which includes ownership, development and management activities. The company owns 52 shopping centres in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Germany, Greece, Romania and Brazil with a total gross lettable area of more than two million m<sup>2</sup>.

In 2009 it managed more than 8,900 tenant contracts and its centres had over 436 million visits.

## Inspiring solutions

Sonae Sierra evaluated a number of solutions before approaching talent specialist Pro.Skills for consultancy. Pro.Skills suggested Lumesse\* Talent Acquisition as the right fit for Sonae Sierra's needs. The solution would enable Sonae Sierra to move its application process online, create a database of applicants and improve the overall recruitment management process.

Solution rollout went smoothly and Sonae Sierra's new recruitment website went live within just a few months. Catarina Oliveira is very positive about the experience of working with the Lumesse consultants. "I've worked on a lot of IT projects," she says. "What was refreshing in this case was that the consultants really knew what we needed from a business point of view - they put themselves in our shoes to get a clear picture of our recruitment process and understand our requirements."

The talent acquisition solution is in use throughout Sonae Sierra's European locations to manage all aspects of its recruitment process. A small corporate HR team handles overall recruitment. An HR co-ordinator in each country supports local recruitment processes and has access to information about local vacancies via the solution.

For Catarina Oliveira a key feature of the solution is its ease of use. "Take me, for example. I didn't participate in any user training," she says. "Even so, I find it very easy to get the information I want out of the system because it's so user friendly."

“Before we rolled out Lumesse Talent Acquisition, recruitment information was held in three places: spreadsheets, emails and the HR team’s heads. Now, we have a single tool that stores it all in one location, giving us much greater control over the entire process and enabling us to share information more effectively.”

Sonae Sierra

### Fantastic outcomes

Having a single database of applicants enables Sonae Sierra to keep track of applicants, including unsolicited ones, and identify suitable candidates more quickly when vacancies arise. The HR team can obtain complete information about a candidate from a single source and be much more consistent in handling applications.

The solution’s reporting capabilities make it straightforward for HR to inform recruiting line managers of progress with their vacancies. They can provide reports on, for example, the number of candidates for a vacancy, or the time taken to schedule interviews.

“Before we rolled out Lumesse Talent Acquisition recruitment information was held in three places: spreadsheets, emails and the HR team’s heads,” says Catarina Oliveira. “Now, we have a single tool that stores it all in one location, giving us much greater control over the entire process and enabling us to share information more effectively.

When a manager asks for an update on a vacancy we can provide it, instantly, without having to spend time collating the data.”

The solution has improved Sonae Sierra’s ability to communicate with candidates, which is enhancing the company’s employer reputation. Every online application - whether spontaneous or for a specific vacancy - is acknowledged automatically. Sonae Sierra then uses the solution to keep in contact with candidates throughout the process, relying on automation to handle certain tasks, including rejection notifications.

The solution also drives efficiencies when Sonae Sierra expands to a new location where it does not have a local partner with an existing workforce. Because of the speed with which HR can screen candidates, the company can be prepared with a pool of suitable people to interview, and can have a whole team in place within just a few weeks.



## In brief

**Solution:** Talent Acquisition  
**Industry:** Construction  
**Country:** Europe  
**Employees:** 1,100

Receiving applications by post and email and managing them on spreadsheets made it difficult and time-consuming for Sonae Sierra's HR team to identify suitable candidates. They also had no insight into recruitment performance and no easy way to communicate progress to the business managers whose vacancies they were filling.

Lumesse Talent Acquisition has been rolled out to Sonae Sierra's European locations.

The company has moved to an online application process and now has a comprehensive database of applicants that is used by the corporate HR team and in-country HR co-ordinators.

The single source of applicant and vacancy information underpins a much more efficient and consistent recruitment process. Sonae Sierra can quickly and easily generate reports for HR and for business managers. The company is also protecting its employer reputation by communicating more effectively with candidates.

## About

Lumesse is the only global company making talent management solutions work locally. We help customers around the world to implement successful local talent management initiatives that identify, nurture and develop the right people, in the right place, at the right time. Our multi-cultural background and presence means we understand how to deliver talent solutions that work the way our customers work, as individuals and as teams, because no two people, organisations or cultures are the same. We regard differences as strengths, not as obstacles.

1,700 customers work with us in over 70 countries because they recognise that commitment, innovation and value only come from people. We help customers to unlock and inspire that human potential in their businesses. Our integrated talent management solutions are comprehensive, intuitive, secure and fully internationalised into over 50 languages.

We have Lumesse offices and partners in more than 40 countries, covering EMEA, the Americas and Asia-Pacific. To find your nearest office and talk to someone who speaks your language, visit:

[www.lumesse.com/get-in-touch](http://www.lumesse.com/get-in-touch)



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