MATCH AS A SERVICE
JOBSPLUS MALTA

MAKING ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY AVAILABLE TO SMALLER COUNTRIES

wcc

REMARKABLE
SOFTWARE
COMBINED WITH
INDUSTRY
EXPERTISE
MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

The Challenge

Malta is one of the smallest countries in the EU, with a total population of 420,000 and a labor force of about 190,000. But managing a small labor force is not necessarily easier than managing a big one. It calls for the same knowledge, strategy, and technology – only usually on a far smaller budget.

Despite limited resources, Malta's Public Employment Service Jobsplus refused to define a limited scope. Their goal was holistic workforce development: considering national employment as a whole. Spotting the gaps, the bottlenecks, the areas of opportunity. Not just supporting Malta's unemployed, but also helping employed people improve their position in an evolving labor market, where competences are increasingly important. Managing supply and demand in a way that leads to maximum value.

To deliver superior services to its workforce, Malta faced several challenges:

> providing effective advice that leads jobseekers to suitable employment
> reaching enough people through the right channels and in a user-friendly way
> getting enough information from employers about their wishes and requirements
> assessing and mapping the competences of jobseekers to improve outcomes
> obtaining knowledge and information on best practices to pull off necessary changes

All this requires a complex system with remarkable matching capabilities. A system that would be prohibitively expensive and complicated for Malta to have custom-built. The old Jobsplus system simply was not cut out to handle these challenges. A new approach was clearly needed.

The Approach

Jobsplus looked to their PES partners for inspiration, best practices, and potential approaches. The Belgian PES, VDAB, provides jobseekers and employers a very modern solution based on WCC's smart software. This became the jumping-off point for Malta's new system. Without compromising on quality, VDAB and Jobsplus defined a plan with an ambitious deadline: the system should be operational in only 18 months.

To achieve this they came up with an innovative approach: Match as a Service. This type of Software as a Service allows organizations to easily incorporate WCC's advanced matching capabilities in their processes. In this unique first deployment, the new Jobsplus solution uses the matching engine of VDAB / WCC as a service. The system also needed a new front end: a job portal that works on all devices, including all mobile devices, to optimize its reach.

The joint project comprised:

> Defining the functional requirements

> Creating a new core system including all new interfaces

> Adapting the VDAB / WCC smart search & match solution

> Creating a new portal serving jobseekers, caseworkers, and employers

In the new Match as a Service system, jobseeker data is anonymized in Malta, respecting privacy legislation, and then sent to VDAB's IT center in Belgium, where a separately configured partition of WCC's ELISE matches jobseeker data with potential jobs in Malta. The results are then sent back to Jobsplus in Malta, all in accordance with Malta's labor market policies and requirements.

Jobsplus cooperated with VDAB and WCC to create the new system. How do they look back on this decision?

Looking back we can only say: without this cooperative approach we could never have managed it. VDAB's experience, and the proven system of VDAB and WCC really gave us the kick-start we needed. If we had to do it all again, we would not change a single thing. We would recommend this approach to all organizations dealing with the same challenges. It is not only about the technical solution but about labor market knowledge, which is essential for a job market platform.

Another important benefit of taking a cooperative approach is that it helps to convince stakeholders. Using this type of best-practice solution provides the confidence that the resulting solution will work and provides a stable foundation to the team.

The system went operational in June 2016. This was fully according to plan, and a great achievement for all parties involved. Jobsplus decided to do a low-profile introduction of the solution, in order to learn from its use in practice first, and to make sure the users had optimal support from the employment officers.

The Result

Using Match as a Service was an innovative strategy that quickly paid off for Malta. Using software as a service provided several benefits over software on premise, including:

> uncomplicated and fast implementation

> low system maintenance and application management costs

> good value for money

The new Jobsplus system is off to a successful and very fast start, even despite its low-profile introduction. Currently, it already supports more than 10 percent of the labor market in Malta. This was achieved mainly through mouth-to-mouth advertisement. In October 2016, we asked different users of the new Jobsplus solution about their experiences.

Job advisors

The job advisors of Jobsplus offer high quality services to both unemployed and employed people. One of the benefits of the new Jobsplus system is that it allows job advisors to extend these services in several highly effective ways.

Competence Check

In the past, job seekers often had unfeasible ambitions about the type of jobs that suited them. Through Competence Checks, job seekers can explore and inventory their competences together with the advisor. Although this is a somewhat time-consuming process, it is also a big step forward: while creating the competences profile, the advisor gets information about the number of vacancies that match the indicated competences. This actually saves time, because they can then apply for these vacancies right away. In addition, careful assessment of competences instead of simply looking

at previous positions or diplomas shows more possible paths to employment, which improves the matches.

Gap Analysis
This is a check the advisor can do to learn which gaps exist between a desired job and the jobseeker's profile. Gap Analysis is used to determine which trainings to recommend to the jobseeker, but it also helps the advisor explain their advice to their client. As a caseworker states:

Job advisor

The new intake approach takes more time, but our advice is much more effective as a result. Now we can really help people get re-employed. We love the mobile accessibility; the system is easier to use and we reach our clients better now. We gain more insight into what employers actually ask for by adding more details about skills and qualifications. This helps us increase the quality of our services and provide more in-depth advice to guide jobseekers in finding employment.

Extracting our clients' experience and the different skills they obtained professionally or through volunteering means we are now getting a more holistic view of each person's capabilities. Clients themselves are also getting more aware of their own capabilities, and Gap Analysis gives them insight into how well they match up with the employer's wishes.

Jobseekers
One of the main goals of the new system was to support Malta's unemployed people and bring them into contact with suitable employment. Already after a few months, it is clear that Jobsplus has set a new standard in Malta with a portal that really brings both parties together.

Jobseeker

*It is simply **the** place to add your profile. Every Maltese who wants a job, or who wants to change jobs, needs to use this system. It brought me in contact with a great employer, which is like a dream come true.*

Employers
As the labor market in Malta is changing, so the demands of employers change. Jobsplus supports this change by offering competence-based matching. This helps employers make better decisions to reduce recruitment costs, but it also calls for a change in the way that employers create their vacancies.

In the new Jobsplus system, employers can create a job profile and then specify the required qualifications for the job. The new focus on competences helps create a profile that precisely describes everything the employer requires. Changes in the profile are directly reflected in the matching candidates returned by the system. This means that as an employer, you get immediate insight into the number of suitable candidates. You can also see who these candidates are and see a Gap Analysis for each candidate. This gives employers the opportunity to contact interesting candidates even before publishing the vacancy.

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An enthusiastic employer

We were in urgent need of a specific employee. It was a matter of days, not weeks or months. I did not have the time to go through a complete recruitment cycle. Jobsplus directly showed me the right candidates, which led to us contacting and hiring our new employee. We use Jobsplus for all our vacancies now.

Also the competence approach is very helpful. We are in a high-tech industry and need specialized people with specific skills. This is not easy in a small labor market, like Malta's. With Jobsplus we can find them, even outside Malta. Jobsplus supports across board matching.

Jobsplus is very satisfied with the approach taken, as the chairman explains:

It was good to have these partnerships with VDAB and WCC. We could never have achieved this by ourselves. And looking at the end result and our budget, I must say that it was excellent value for money.

The next challenge for Malta lies in expanding the adoption of the system.

Chairman Jobsplus

The system is here to stay. We will now start with a marketing campaign to approach employers more personally.

Jobsplus is proud of the achieved results. The new system is more effective, has a much wider potential reach, and offers more possibilities for capturing job seekers' competences and employers' needs. Jobsplus succeeded on an ambitious timeline and obtained a high-end solution that supports the sustainable development of Malta's workforce.

Match as a Service

The successful Jobsplus system showcases the various benefits of using Match as a Service. Malta was the first country to catch on, but other smaller Public Employment Services can adopt their strategy to keep up-front investments low and minimize hardware, maintenance, and implementation costs. By incorporating WCC's advanced matching capabilities in PES processes, case workers can find suitable jobs almost instantly, or offer personalized advice on additional training to improve the job seeker's chances of finding work.

About WCC

Our vision

People in organizations make decisions. In the markets we focus on, those decisions profoundly impact people's lives. To make the right decisions in an increasingly complex world, it is necessary to have excellent software. That is what drives us at WCC: enabling people to make better decisions.

Our mission & strategy

WCC wants to give people the answers they need, not just the ones they asked for. We thrive on developing software that can connect, combine, and make sense of large amounts of data stored in different systems. Software that can communicate with the users in a human way, and that delivers superior results so our customers can make a difference. We call this "software that matters". But great software alone is not enough to get the best results. What sets WCC apart is the combination of remarkable software with in-depth knowledge of our customers' business. That is why business and implementation consultancy is an important part of our strategy. We focus on two markets: Employment and Identity.

Our products and services

The core of the Employment market is matching people with sustainable jobs effectively and efficiently. WCC has proven to be unequalled in doing just that. Our Employment Platform, which combines unique search and match capability with advanced gap analysis and referral to the right measures, delivers superior strategic value to our customers. Many of the world's largest employment and staffing organizations use our products and expertise, including Randstad, Robert Half, and the public employment services of Germany, France, and the Netherlands.

The security needs of the Identity market are stringent. Border management and law enforcement agencies face the challenge of quickly and accurately identifying people from huge amounts of data spread over many different databases and formats. WCC's software incorporates the necessary evidence-based algorithms, such as multi-cultural name matching, to make correct identifications. HERMES, our API/PNR solution, adheres to industry standards and is easy to implement and operate. Our customers include UNHCR and the European Union.

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