



**EUROPEAN
RENTAL
ASSOCIATION**

ERA CASEBOOK

Best practice in recruitment
and retention of Millennials
in the rental industry



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WELCOME

from Pierre Boels, ERA President

There is no doubt that recruiting and retaining Millennials is a hot topic. In fact, it sparked one of the most robust and interesting debates among ERA members that we have ever experienced.

The digital era has transformed how we serve our customers and how we manage our fleets. Whether we like it or not, the digital era will also transform how we attract the brightest and best talent. Millennials are a generation raised on the internet, so traditional recruitment tactics may need to be augmented with a more targeted approach. This could mean better use of business-focused social media like LinkedIn and ensuring that you have a smartphone-friendly careers website. Or it could include leading-edge innovations such as accepting video CVs and conducting first-stage interviews over Skype.

Millennials often also have radically different expectations of career development, company culture and work/life balance compared to previous generations. Different mentoring and training techniques could be required to get the best out of Millennials. And crucially, we should ensure that we promote the rental concept as an originator of the Sharing Economy that is increasingly part of Millennials' lives.

Of course, along with challenges, today's young people bring great opportunities to any business. They are extremely tech-savvy and can spark ideas on new ways of working that might just give you a competitive edge. Most importantly,

they represent the leaders of the future – as managers, owners and directors of existing businesses, and undoubtedly as the future founders of exciting new rental companies.

In this guide, the ERA aims to provide you with practical knowledge on how to embrace the goals, expectations and ambitions of today's Millennials so that your company can continue to prosper in an ever-evolving rental market.

This e-book focuses on best practice case studies from exemplar rental companies that are embracing the opportunity, while remaining cognisant of the challenges. We look at the key topics such as how our business model, and our visions and values correspond with the ethics and career desires of Millennials; innovative recruitment strategies and new ways of communication.

We are very grateful to the rental companies who gave their time to be interviewed for these case studies: A-Plant, HSS, Kiloutou, Loxam and Ramirent. They are all established businesses, each with hundreds of rental locations. However, pretty much all of the ways that they work to recruit and retain Millennials can also be used by smaller, independent rental operations. After all, being innovative and thinking creatively is what we do as an industry.

As always, we would welcome your feedback and stories about your own experiences. Who knows – maybe your company will feature in our next e-book?



CONTENTS

Page 2

Case study 1: A-Plant on apprentices

Page 3

Case study 2: Kiloutou on communication

Page 4

Case study 3: Loxam on fast-track career opportunities

Page 5

Case study 4: HSS on communication

Page 6

Case study 5: Ramirent on sustainability

Page 7

Summary of Key Points

Page 8

Find out more: ERA Convention 2017



CASE STUDY

FROM APPRENTICE TO CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Sat Dhaiwal, Chief Executive Officer of A-Plant, explains how his own personal journey has positively influenced the company's investment in apprentices.

Sat Dhaiwal was named ERA and IRN Rental Person of the Year at the European Rental Awards 2016, after leading A-Plant to new heights.

The award recognised how, as CEO, he oversaw a 17% rise in sales and a 45% rise in profits for the UK's largest equipment rental company, which is part of FTSE 100 company Ashted Group plc. It is the latest accolade in what has been a stellar career for Sat. But it all started out with an apprenticeship.

"I was always ambitious but at 16 years old I never visualised I'd be in the CEO's seat," he said. "However, the experience I gained from my apprenticeship was invaluable, as I learned the rental business from the ground up. This gave me the strong foundations on which to build a career in this industry."

Sat began his career in rental as an apprentice fitter aged 16 and worked his way up the ranks. In 1992 he joined A-Plant as a depot manager, aged just 25. He became the company's youngest ever Regional Director at 27, and more promotions rapidly followed until he was appointed as CEO in 2002.

He has a strong personal commitment to staff development and has ensured that A-Plant has one of the most active apprenticeship schemes in the industry. During 2015 and 2016 A-Plant made its largest ever investment in apprentices, taking on 100 new trainees each year, of which a quarter were female. These apprenticeships covered a number of roles including fitters, drivers, hire controllers and customer service staff. In 2016 the company went on to provide over 5,000 training days to its employees.

"We have adopted a long-term view by recruiting more apprentices in our quest to attract and retain the best people in our industry," he said. "Our key objective is to have a fully qualified and competent workforce and our Apprentice Academy plays a key role in helping us achieve this. Our apprenticeship schemes are a fantastic route to a long and fruitful career with A-Plant, allowing people to earn as they learn."

In 2017, A-Plant featured in the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employer List - the only major hire company included. Furthermore, in 2014, the company won the Apprentice Large Employer of the Year Award, at the Construction Industry Training Board Managing Agency Apprentice Awards. A-Plant apprentices have also won national awards in the Construction Plant Hire Association's Stars of the Future programme.

"We're very proud of our award-winning Apprenticeship programme," he added. "We're pleased to say that it's one of the most successful and sought-after programmes in the hire industry, and we typically invest over £1 million each year in the recruitment and training of our apprentices."

Key Points

INVESTMENT IN APPRENTICES

£1m+ a year invested in apprentices

5,000 training days per year provided

25% of apprentice intake is female

100+ apprenticeships offered each year



A STELLAR CAREER

1986: Starts in rental industry as apprentice fitter

1992: Joins A-Plant as depot manager

1995: Becomes A-Plant's youngest ever Regional Director

1998: Appointed Managing Director of A-Plant East

2002: Becomes CEO of A-Plant

2016: Wins ERA/IRN Rental Person of the Year



CASE STUDY REACHING GENERATION 'M'

David Lamiaux, Director of HR at Kiloutou, outlines how his company uses innovative new recruitment strategies to reach Millennials.

David Lamiaux is an example of how to achieve a rewarding career in rental. He began as an intern after studying law and has spent his entire working life with Kiloutou. David helped to build and shape the HR department, starting in 2002. During that time, Kiloutou has grown from 1,000 people in France to 4,000 people, with 500 branches in four countries. In 2017 the company received Top Employer certification for the fourth consecutive year.

"Rental is not a well-known industry or a sexy industry for Millennials," said David. "Supporting the construction and public works sectors is not as sexy as a career in banking or retail. So we have to work a little bit harder and be more creative to attract the best candidates."

"Fundamentally we have to think more creatively because we cannot invest in expensive recruitment campaigns. Part of our company culture is thinking differently to everyone else, so we enjoy the challenge."

Kiloutou also tailors its recruitment strategy for two separate groups. "With Millennials in France there is a big difference between graduates and non-graduates, so you need to have specific methods to reach both groups."

"For most of the non-graduates we recruit, this is their very first job, so the focus is on developing their skills. With graduates, we talk to them more about career opportunities, foreign travel and positions of responsibility."

"The first step is to show candidates who we are and what we do. For this we use a lot of images and videos to showcase our company. We believe that the most attractive element is our culture. Our culture is very much that we are professional, but we also don't take ourselves too seriously."

More than 50% of Kiloutou's managers were promotions from within the company. "We can show many examples of people who have started

their careers at Kiloutou and progressed to become senior directors - for example, the CEO of our operations in Poland is a former plant manager."

Kiloutou uses a range of communications tools to help recruit over 200 young people every year. "For recruitment, newspaper advertising is dead. We use job boards, social media and networks to reach Millennials. For graduates we are very active on LinkedIn. In 2016 we put someone full time onto recruiting graduates through LinkedIn and it has been very successful for us."

"We have implemented innovative programmes in our company such as the award-winning Kiloutou Experience. We gathered the recruits together for a 'speed recruiting' day of activities and interviews."

"Videos are also a very important recruitment tool for us. By watching these short movies, people get a real insight into who we are, into our culture and our values. It is not a glossy marketing brochure; you can see our people smiling, laughing, and understand immediately their relationships with one another."

"We encourage our employees to talk directly to candidates and we now have 25 to 30 ambassadors for Kiloutou. I am very passionate about this, because it is a discourse of truth. We often invite job applicants to spend a day with us before they sign their contract, so that they can experience and understand the real Kiloutou. This level of disclosure and honesty is very powerful and is extremely attractive to Millennials."

LINKS TO KILOUTOU RECRUITMENT VIDEOS

www.youtube.com/watch?v=_50gTWmA9SM

www.youtube.com/watch?v=vT0qAgbE4iQ

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ww0VLGXynUM



Key Points

- Develop a strong corporate culture
- Try to think creatively about recruitment
- Use different strategies for graduates and non-graduates
- Highlight the career opportunities in rental
- Use video and social media extensively
- Be honest and truthful in your discourse with Millennials





Key Points

1. Use digital recruitment strategies and open days to attract the best candidates
2. Highlight the autonomy that branch managers have:
 - a. P&L responsibility
 - b. Managing a team
 - c. Developing a customer base
 - d. Looking after the equipment and the site
3. Communicate how large rental companies can offer international opportunities
4. Demonstrate how your company has progressed employees' careers to director level
5. Provide mentoring and strong support to branch managers from HQ



CASE STUDY

FAST TRACK TO SUCCESS

Nicolas Jonville, HR Director at Loxam, explains how the rental industry can offer Millennials job satisfaction through responsibility.

Loxam recruits every year around 500 employees, and 50% are under 30 years of age. The company recognises that it has a lot to offer Millennials.

"We see that Millennials are looking for more autonomy, various missions, and innovation, from companies that have strong ethics and offer more international opportunities," said Nicolas. "In this respect, our industry has many advantages to offer Millennials. The structure of a rental company's branch network, with lots of autonomous teams, is attractive. When you join Loxam, you are joining a leader in rental. But it is still an organisation that is based on a network of small branches. 700 branches are like 700 small companies. Everyone is therefore part of a small, local team of five or six people, each with a clear role with specific responsibilities. On top of that, the diversity of our customers and materials also offer new challenges every day. Most of our employees mentioned that they never live two similar working days."

Having a relatively high amount of responsibility quite quickly is also a big attraction for Millennials graduated in management. "When it comes to recruiting graduates, we focus very much on the fact that we will very quickly give them a lot of responsibility" said Nicolas. "For recruitment in branch manager positions, we look for graduates who are interested in management, where they have the full responsibility of a business unit. We have many branch managers who joined Loxam each year before they were 30 years old. As a branch manager, all the following issues are under your responsibility: the customer base, the commercial development, the team, the workshop and site, the materials and equipment, the fleet management and investments, the P&L management. This is a wide-ranging set of responsibilities when you are young."



"For recruitment on the technical and operational side, such as mechanics or drivers, which represents a significant part of our recruitment, it is crucial that the applicants also understand they are joining a small team and will have their own responsibilities in their field of competences. Everyone can really measure his contribution to the success of his team, of his branch. This ensures that the Millennial generation can come to work and feel a sense of job satisfaction."

"In both cases, as part of a big company, the newcomers have many prospects to further their careers, so it is really the best of both worlds. Big rental companies like Loxam can provide a career path in different countries across Europe with a real training policy and have a focus on development and innovation with so many projects (technical, commercial, IT, etc.) to implement every year."

Nicolas concluded: "We are in our rental business in the new circular economy. Equipment rental is in itself an act of sustainable development, as it replaces product ownership by product use. This also provides clear value in line with the values of our Millennials."



COMPANY PROFILE

- 700 branches across Europe
- Recruits 500 employees every year
- 50% of new recruits are under 30 years of age



CASE STUDY

COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY

Lisa Crawford, Head of HR at HSS Hire Group, explains how her company uses digital communications to recruit and retain Millennials.

HSS is a leading provider of tools, equipment and specialist services, with a network of more than 250 locations, 23 product categories and 35,000 live customer accounts. As part of its growth strategy, HSS wanted to understand its brand values and the role HSS plays in customers' lives.

A crucial step in this process was identifying the essence of its 'employer brand' - how it is perceived by employees. "The findings included that HSS is a great place to work, with a great bunch of people; and every day is different," said Lisa.

"Our group brand identity is based around the phrase 'Make it...', so we created the concept of people making a career at HSS. For example, 'Make it... happen', or 'Make it... a great place to work'. In this way we create a strong employer brand within the group brand structure."

A key element is the dedicated recruitment website, www.hsscareers.co.uk. "Our recruitment website enables us to present a broader perspective on the company. People can see it's not just about technicians and drivers - there is a wide range of roles.

"The website is very visual; packed full of images and videos. We also encourage employees to be very honest about what their jobs entail. We avoid over-selling and we find this approach works."

The company uses a combination of traditional and innovative techniques to recruit and retain Millennials.

"We showcase the opportunities for rapid career advancement. One of our Managing Directors is a great example; he started out as an apprentice. So new recruits can see there is a path for career progression.

"We also focus on rental being in the business of sustainability, as well as the company's history and values. This information is prominent on our careers site, as young people increasingly make career choices based on the company they are joining, not just the role."

Traditional recruitment channels include working with schools, colleges and some universities. HSS also encourages work experience and graduate placements.

Innovations include the Refer a Friend programme. Employees recommend a friend to join the company, and HSS rewards them with a financial bonus for each friend who becomes a new colleague.

Social media also plays a key role. "We advertise on job boards but have also advertised on Spotify. We have a Twitter account dedicated to recruitment, so we can fully focus the content on attracting new people into the business."

With more than 250 locations, internal communication is vital. "We connect the depots through an internal social network called Yammer. This creates much more social interaction between the branches and some healthy competition."

When it comes to retention, HSS offers Millennials an attractive package. "We offer volunteering opportunities to help their local communities, and started the Stretch e-learning programme in 2016 to develop home-grown talent."

The company also provides a superb benefits package, including a cycle to work programme, car leasing scheme, discount gym membership and a health plan. "Our employee engagement survey showed that these benefits were really valued by the work force, so we enhanced the package and made it even more flexible."

Key Points

- Develop a strong sub-brand for recruitment
- Consider creating a dedicated recruitment website
- Use videos to give people a true picture of your company
- Don't try to over-sell your company; give an honest view
- Communicate your company's vision and values
- Use a mixture of digital and traditional methods of recruitment
- Ensure your internal communications are strong
- Use employee surveys to find out what they really want



COMPANY PROFILE

- More than 250 locations across UK & Ireland
- 2,900 employees
- Find out more at www.hsscareers.co.uk



RAMIRENT

CASE STUDY

MARKETING OUR GREEN CREDENTIALS

Franciska Janzon, Senior Vice-President of Marketing, Communications and IR at Ramirent, discusses promoting the sustainability credentials of rental to Millennials.

The rental industry is an originator of the 'sharing economy' model that is one of the fastest growing sectors in Europe.

"Millennials - or indeed anyone looking for a job - want to be employed by a company doing smart things, said Franciska. "It is very trendy to talk about the sharing economy, so we can use this trend to our advantage. Effectively we are part of the same trend as Airbnb and Uber. After all, rental is an established business model for economising and conserving resources."

"We share not only machines but also share knowledge and best practice from one industry sector to the next. In this way we improve safety and efficiency across our customer base. The knowledge we accumulate is even shared with our suppliers so that they can develop better products."

Including the sharing economy and sustainability in recruitment strategies is vital to attracting Millennials. "The success of any company rests on the quality and engagement of its employees," said Franciska. "We therefore have to stand out as the rental company that Millennials want to work for."

"There is a growing body of information about the business models that Millennials find important and meaningful. Over the past few years, work around the sustainability elements of the rental industry has developed significantly. Now our task is to communicate this message to Millennials, so that they understand our business promotes resource efficiency and is environmentally-friendly."

"Millennials are born with technologies so they find them much easier to use. In order to recruit and retain Millennials, we have to have excellent digital channels and especially social media. We can use social media to promote the key messages for our customers and for potential new employees. We work closely with our HR team to keep our messaging fresh. In this way we include those values that are important to Millennials in our communications."

Diversity and gender equality are also enshrined in a strong code of conduct. "A company with strong ethics is attractive to Millennials. Being an ethical company is part of our company values and the code of conduct plays a big part in our induction training. Being a sensible and responsible business means that we have to make every employee feel at home."

"This is a very exciting, inspiring time to be in rental, with the industry evolving at a really rapid pace. It is a simple business in some ways but it is also wonderful to be able to say that you help to save the planet through simple practices. It isn't rocket science. You can create a more sustainable society through sharing tools and equipment."

Key Points

- Create a strong employer brand
- Emphasise the role of rental in the sharing economy
- Highlight how you share knowledge and best practice
- Develop and communicate a strong code of ethics
- Use a wide range of digital communications tools



COMPANY PROFILE

- 290 rental stores in Ramirent
- 2,686 employees
- 16% female employees of total workforce
- 38% recycled and reused waste of total waste

KEY POINTS

APPRENTICESHIPS

- Invest in recruiting apprentices
- Provide apprentices with the best possible training
- Make sure apprenticeships are appealing to a diverse range of young people

SUSTAINABILITY

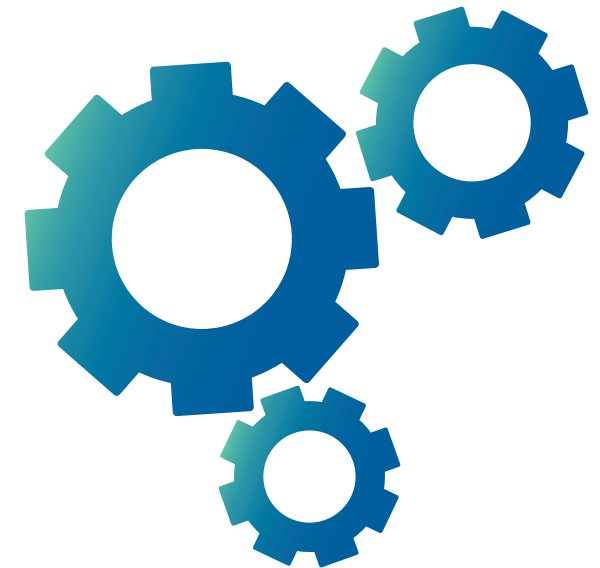
- A strong employer brand must include sustainability and ethics
- Emphasise the role of rental in the sharing economy
- Highlight how you share knowledge and best practice
- Develop and communicate a strong code of ethics

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Emphasise the autonomy and responsibilities that branch managers have:
 - P&L responsibility
 - Managing a team
 - Developing a customer base
 - Looking after the equipment and the site
- Reinforce how other employees still have responsibilities, often within a small team
- Communicate how large rental companies can offer international opportunities
- Demonstrate how your company has progressed people's careers to director level
- Provide mentoring and strong support to branch managers from HQ

COMMUNICATION

- Develop a strong employer brand to reflect your corporate culture
- Think creatively – look for good ideas in other companies and other sectors outside of rental
- Use different communications strategies for graduates and non-graduates
- Make the most of social media – Millennials are very engaged in this way
- Consider creating a dedicated recruitment website or mini-site
- Use videos to provide an accurate picture of your company
- Don't try to over-sell your company; give an honest, unvarnished view
- Communicate your company's vision and values
- Use a mixture of digital and traditional methods of recruitment
- Use open days as a way of engaging potential candidates
- Ensure your internal communications are strong
- Use employee surveys to find out what they really want



Find out more at the **ERA CONVENTION 2017**

The ERA Convention takes place at the **RAI Amsterdam, 02-04 May 2017**, in conjunction with the International Rental Exhibition (IRE). The Convention brings together some of the brightest and best people working within the rental industry. A superb forum for debate and to share best practice, the theme of this year's Convention is "How to secure talent for the future". The companies featured in this e-book will participate in the Promotion Workshop on 04 May.

The ERA is also working on an in-depth report into recruiting and retaining Millennials. This comprehensive study will be launched at the Convention on 02 May, with a special discussion panel featuring rental companies and HR experts.

Join us at the ERA Convention in order to take part in the discussion and learn more about this crucial topic. For further details on the Convention, or to book your place

visit <http://erarental.org/en/convention>



About ERA

The key mission of ERA is to promote the rental concept in order to facilitate a continued growth of the rental industry by creating an open European market, at a much larger scale than any national market. To achieve this goal, ERA acts as the representative association of the equipment rental sector at European level, complementing the activities undertaken by national rental associations locally. Our work focuses on 4 main areas:

- Promotion of the rental concept
- Rental market statistics and data
- Equipment technology
- Sustainability