

update: energy

04.

Interview with Adrian Phillips, Managing Director at Alderley FZE

We caught up with Adrian to talk about his plans for the business over the next year

08.

Two North Easts working together

Bond Dickinson's Richard Cockburn argues for greater collaboration in the UK oil and gas sector

12.

Case study:

Nigel Wright helps Aubin Group improve employment brand to attract in-demand skills



Welcome to our new UK Energy Update

Welcome to our Energy Update, Nigel Wright's annual in-house publication for the global oil and gas market.



There continues to be real optimism in the oil and gas industry, with most businesses expecting to increase permanent and contractor staffing levels in the next 12 months. Investment in asset development and asset improvement, as well as technological innovation emerging from the subsea and shale gas sectors, will continue to create opportunities and drive growth.

The recent referendum in Scotland did, however, bring to the fore concerns about the future sustainability of the North Sea industry. Issues such as low levels of production, high operating costs, the demand for new wells and the need for further government investment and incentives, continue to be hotly debated. On page 8 Bond Dickinson's Richard Cockburn explains why greater collaboration between companies based in the UK's 'two North Easts' is key to future prosperity.

In other oil and gas hotspots like the Middle East, markets remain buoyant. However, an evolving competitive environment alongside an exacerbated and insecure political situation, are challenges businesses operating in the region are now encountering on a daily basis. Alderley PLC's Middle East director Adrian Phillips gives us his view on the market on page 4.

Talent scarcity and remuneration are issues that remain high on the agenda for oil and gas businesses. Increased competition for the best people has led to rising salaries, forcing many companies to be

more creative in attracting the best people to give them a competitive advantage. The results from our UK Oil and Gas industry salary survey on page 11 highlight that although financial rewards remain important, there are in fact a range of other benefits such as training and career development that are increasingly attractive to candidates.

With the shift in focus towards attracting talent based on non-monetary factors, the employment brand has returned to the fore of recruitment strategies within the oil and gas sector. During the last 12 months Nigel Wright has instigated numerous recruitment campaigns (like the one on page 12) where we have gone to market by selling a different yet compelling proposition to candidates, focused on other benefits aside from salary. Further details of our employer branding trends and how we can help are on page 14.

At Nigel Wright, we have strong industry relationships, an ever growing database of the best in-demand candidates and a growing team of consultants, all of whom have a long tenure and great experience working within the industry. We have an intimate understanding of the trends that are impacting the oil and gas industry and can advise clients on key strategic areas that go beyond the hiring process.

We hope you enjoy reading our Energy Update and we welcome any feedback on any of the content.

Nigel Wright launches updated website

To support our international growth, we have been working on developing our brand identity to more accurately reflect our expanding business. As part of this process, in May, we launched our new Group website.

The website now encompasses the four divisional areas of the Nigel Wright Group: Energy, Consumer, Recruitment and Executive Search; each with its own unique website and brand identity.

If before, customers were directed to a website targeting the consumer sector exclusively, the new homepage now features a general Group landing page, where you can access the particular division most relevant to you. Once one of the four options is selected, you are taken to a full website entirely dedicated to the services and expertise offered by that division:

Energy: This is a new site which includes information specifically about the services and expertise offered by our Energy industry team.

Consumer: This site is dedicated to our UK and International Consumer practice.

Executive Search: A new site which covers information about the services and expertise offered by the Executive Search teams and consultants operating across our business.

Recruitment: A new site structured specifically around the services and expertise offered by our generalist recruitment practice in the UK.



We hope that the new structure will make us more accessible to you, and will help you source the information you need from us in a quick and straightforward way.

Do you have any comments on how we can improve your navigation experience? Please contact us at creative@nigelwright.com with your feedback and suggestions.

Nigel Wright's charity of choice

We are proud to announce that Cancer Research is our UK charity of choice for 2014/2015.

Our fundraising target for this year is £15,000, a large part of which we actually raised during the Nigel Wright National Three Peaks Challenge, which took place in July.

This involved walking the highest mountains in Scotland, England and Wales, all in the space of 24 hours. Seventeen members of staff from our UK and international offices signed up for this challenge, which is considered to be the toughest endurance event for non-professional athletes, and they all completed the course.

In total, the team raised an extraordinary £12,467 for Cancer Research UK! Throughout the year, we will also be organising a number of other fundraising events such as sporting challenges, wine tastings, networking presentations, and cake/bake sales.

ABOUT CANCER RESEARCH UK:

Cancer Research is the world's leading charity dedicated to beating cancer through research. They have saved millions of lives by discovering new ways to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer, and survival has doubled over the past 40 years. Every day in the UK there are more than 400 people diagnosed with cancer who will survive the disease for more than 10 years thanks to research.

If you would like to contribute to any of our other fundraising initiatives, please visit our company's [JustGiving page at \[www.justgiving.com/company/NWC\]\(http://www.justgiving.com/company/NWC\)](http://www.justgiving.com/company/NWC)

Adrian Phillips

Managing Director at Alderley FZE

Alderley is a manufacturer of metering systems, hydraulic control systems and produced water treatment solutions. It supplies the oil, gas and petrochemical industries worldwide through its network of companies in Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

Earlier this year Alderley's Middle East division, Alderley FZE, appointed new Managing Director Adrian Phillips to further develop its capabilities in the region. We caught up with Adrian to talk about his plans for the business over the next year, as well as his perspectives on technology innovation, talent attraction and competition in the global oil and gas sector.

You joined Alderley FZE in February, what are your key objectives?

I have been tasked with driving performance and improving the Middle East delivery capability. The establishment of Alderley in Dubai in 2001 has increased Alderley's ability to work across the Middle East, allowing the business to strive for improved execution, customer reach and efficiencies. Capturing this opportunity, as well as increasing the adoption of best practices, are my strategic priorities in 2014 and beyond. We also have three near term priorities: delivering the same level of execution capability across our two execution centres in Dammam and Dubai; focusing on the wider service opportunity, and improving our internal reporting so we can understand what and how we can improve whilst meeting our commitments to Alderley and its shareholders in a more consistent and predictable way. By doing this we will become more competitive and better serve our customers.

What role has Alderley FZE played in the Group's overall growth over the last few years?

Alderley FZE's role has been quite significant. In 2011, to mark its ten year anniversary, Alderley FZE announced strong financial results

and profitability, with turnover exceeding \$40m. Buoyant markets in the Middle East have further resulted in a number of landmark contract wins. Today, Alderley FZE (Dubai) which includes Dammam, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as a fully owned subsidiary is the Group's largest set of operating companies overseas, employing over 250 permanent staff and contract workers. In 2013, to accommodate its rapid growth, FZE further expanded its facilities in Dubai which involved the construction of a modern two storey office building and production area of more than 10,000m². The reputation we have for providing high quality, value added solutions, supported through excellent site services via our locally based teams has been the key to our success and is the formula we will apply for our continued growth.

Which aspect of Alderley's service offering is most prominent in the Middle East?

Alderley FZE was established to support the design and manufacture of oil and gas metering and process equipment and the Middle East continues to be the single most important market for metering solutions. Alderley is well positioned to serve the local markets and no other competitor can even begin to come close to the commitment Alderley has made to metering in the Middle East. The priority is that Alderley continues to provide exceptional service both in terms of capital project capability and, increasingly, as the installed base of metering systems grows, our ability to service equipment in the field. Our decision to put boots on the ground in the Middle East is the envy of all our competitors, but we must not be complacent. We must continually ask ourselves how presence translates to competitive

A photograph of a modern office interior. A large, curved white reception desk is the central focus, featuring the word "Alderley" in large, dark grey, 3D block letters. Above the desk, a colorful sculpture of a bird, possibly a kingfisher, is mounted on the wall. The desk is decorated with a horizontal stripe in purple, orange, and red. To the left, a potted plant sits on a white stand. The floor is made of dark, polished stone tiles. The lighting is bright and even.

Alderley



Adrian Phillips

advantage and explore all avenues we can, to operate efficiently together. Key to all this is to attract and retain a strong and motivated workforce.

How does Alderley FZE attract and retain talent in the Middle East?

People are attracted to Alderley because it has a robust and profitable business model with good facilities and products. The depth and strength of our management team, in terms of technical and leadership competence, is also very good. Our people feel part of a team and find working here a rewarding and enjoyable experience. The Middle East will support Alderley in defining a flexible career path across our organisations, providing existing employees with new internal career opportunities. These factors are further underpinned by Alderley FZE's excellent health and safety and quality systems. Of course, salary and compensation is another factor; we have competitive remuneration packages to attract the best people. It's important to note though that the dynamics for attracting talent in the Middle East are slightly different to other oil and gas 'hotspots.' We have easier access to the sub-continent of India, for example, which provides companies here with a very wide and deep resource pool of well-qualified individuals.

In your view, are oil and gas industry salary and bonus increases sustainable?

Compared to many other global industries, I don't believe the oil and gas sector is out of kilter. It's always the case, though, that when the price of oil is high so are the salaries. Companies undertaking large

The Middle East oil and gas market is tightly controlled by a small number of very large, consolidated and static national companies, with incredible power and influence.

projects, or with full order books, are usually prepared to pay more for people. These firms will actively poach candidates and create churn in the market. This can be extremely destructive because salary expectations increase as a consequence. I think these conditions are less sustainable for contractors, however, because as soon as the market declines, they will be the first people to lose their jobs.

Over the last 30 years there have been huge advancements in oil and gas technology. What are the latest technology trends within your field? How is Alderley staying abreast of the competition?

The trend within metering is a move away from using traditional physical displacement meters and towards the implementation of ultra-sonic meters. Although ultra-sonic meters are not completely new in the market, adoption has been slow, particularly in the Middle East. Other significant innovations include asset integrity software, such as remote equipment healthcare monitoring tools. A lot of developments in the wider industry come from the subsea sector, which is at the frontier of oil and gas technology innovation. From a service perspective, integrating asset integrity or monitoring technology into our business solutions will create opportunities for us moving forward. Alderley is an integration company. We don't conduct R&D or develop new products, but rather find ways to deploy technology and services around our core systems. Most of the technology that is built into our core systems is developed by third party manufacturers. This actually enables us to stay flexible and, as a technology agnostic supplier, a trusted partner in the industry.

How is the competitive environment in the Middle East evolving?

The Middle East oil and gas market is tightly controlled by a small number of very large, consolidated and static national companies, with incredible power and influence. There are, however, an increasing number of companies gradually re-entering the market. The likes of Shell, BP, ENI and Total – businesses that have largely been locked out of some Middle Eastern markets after the oil embargos and asset nationalisation of the last century – are gradually emerging on the scene again, particularly in Iraq. Russian and Chinese businesses are also gaining a regional foothold, specifically in Iran and Iraq, buying up resources and undertaking massive infrastructure projects. Ultimately, though, it's never going to be a region with a large number of independents or start-ups, so the competitive environment won't change dramatically. What's significant for suppliers like Alderley is that these big producers are pumping 20 or 30 million barrels of oil a day, across the region, and consequently provide us with a tremendous volume of business.

Is supply disruption caused by conflict in the Middle East impacting your growth? What's the general feeling about this issue in the market at the moment?

It hasn't really affected Saudi, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman. There's no question, though, that some of the bigger projects have been stalled because people are waiting to see how the political situation will unfold. These are the kind of opportunities the Russians and Chinese are capitalising on because they have a bigger appetite for risk. Northern Iraq and Syria are obviously the trouble hotspots, but the oil and gas industry in Iraq is largely concentrated in the south around Basra. That area, to date, has been relatively untouched by ISIS. We regularly send people to Iraq to commission service equipment and the general mood is 'business as usual'.

What's the business environment like in the Middle East region compared to Europe and LatAm where you've also worked? What advice would you give to other executives considering relocating to the Middle East?

The customer base in the Middle East is fairly unusual because the majority of companies are large state owned enterprises. These organisations can be incredibly bureaucratic in the way they operate. All equipment and service approvals must be in place and the documentation has to be correct. They also effectively control the supply chain and define who you can and can't do business with. So, it's quite a challenging market to trade in compared to places like Aberdeen, for example, where there are lots of independents and fewer rules and regulations. If you can become a preferred supplier to one of the monopoly producers, though, life can be very rosy. You have a similar situation in Mexico, where I've previously worked, with one state owned producer that owns the market. Generally

though, due to the international nature of the oil and gas industry, the experience tends to be consistent. Wherever I've worked, I've always been surrounded by an extraordinary group of hard working people and had the opportunity to do and see lots of exciting things, particularly in places like Mexico and Dubai.

What skills and knowledge do you think you could bring back to developed markets?

Alderley is a highly autonomous operation. So, in the Middle East, more so than anywhere else I've worked, I've certainly had to get more accustomed to the finer details of the technology, as well as the whole production, manufacturing and project management cycle. I think it's made me a much better manager of an organisation or a P&L.

What kind of leader are you? How do you get the most out of your teams?

Communication is really important in making sure objectives are achieved. I believe in reducing complexity through simple and focused messages and cross functional collaboration. If you're not talking to people regularly and giving clear instructions, or bringing groups of people together to get consensus and make things happen, then you're just going to make life difficult for yourself.

Outside of work, how do you challenge yourself?

I'm a cyclist and Dubai has amazing facilities for cycling, such as a 100km cycle loop in the desert, which I complete once per week. I am slowly working toward competing in my first triathlon.



Two North Easts working together

Richard Cockburn, Partner for Energy and Natural Resources at law firm Bond Dickinson, tells us why oil and gas industry stakeholders based in the UK's 'two North Easts' – North East England and North East Scotland – need to encourage greater collaboration to help solve the skills deficit and maintain their deserved positions as global energy centres.

For several years now the North Sea oil and gas industry has been in the midst of a skills shortage.

In the inaugural Oil and Gas Survey by Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce's (AGCC) in October 2004, operators and contractors highlighted skills shortages as the factor most likely to limit activity if demand was maintained.

A decade on and the industry is buoyant, confidence is high, investment is at a record level but the situation remains exactly the same.

Skills shortages and competition for staff still play a significant role in constraining contractors' United Kingdom Continental Shelf operations and remains the second most common problem, particularly for companies with between 200 and 500 employees.

Accountancy firm PwC estimated in 2012 that Aberdeen needs to recruit 120,000 skilled workers by 2022 or risk losing its place as one of the world's great energy centres.

By Graeme Smith

There are a number of companies based in the North East of England which are looking to expand either in, or into, oil and gas.

With global competition and an ageing workforce the industry will need 96,000 just to replace those leaving and a further 24,000 to cope with anticipated growth.

Numerous initiatives are underway involving organisations like Opito, Oil & Gas UK and Subsea UK as well as many individual companies but at least part of the solution could lie less than 300 miles away.



A wave of momentum is building up involving collaboration between the UK's two North Easts according to Richard Cockburn, a partner in the Energy and Natural Resources team at Bond Dickinson which has representation in both.

He said there is a huge pipeline of work to come from the North Sea and North East England is ideally placed to pick up a large slice of that – which could lead to the creation of thousands of jobs.

There are a number of companies based in the North East of England which are looking to expand either in, or into, oil and gas.

Some have been involved in more mainstream engineering, construction or the marine sector and are looking at the oil and gas sector, seeing it is still booming, and thinking they would like a slice of that pie.

While there might be fluctuations in the level of investment in oil and gas generally the level of activity in Aberdeen and the North East of Scotland remains high.

That means there can be a bottleneck in the supply chain in Aberdeen which creates opportunities for contractors from the North East of England to come in and offer additional supply.

"There are also opportunities for that supply chain in areas outside Aberdeen which are involved in oil and gas work," said Cockburn.

"In particular they could look at areas like the Cromarty Firth, Nigg and Ardersier where facilities are developing rapidly, creating a growing need for contractors - and it might be difficult to obtain the choice of contractor they need in the Aberdeen area.

"There will undoubtedly be rivalry at times but if the North East of England can stand side-by-side with the North and North East of Scotland to offer jointly a complete, dependable and cost effective supply chain then the rewards will continue to flow from the North Sea oil and gas industry.

"The reality of the matter is that some of the supply chain companies in Aberdeen are out of the door with work and if firms in the North East of England can take the pressure off them then working together might create many more opportunities."

He said there was undoubtedly growing interest from businesses in the North East of England in plugging gaps in the oil and gas supply chain caused by the skills shortage and high property costs in the North East of Scotland which is the UK's most buoyant

70% of the oil and gas platforms operating in the North Sea were built in the region and many of them could be heading back to the North East of England for dismantling.

area outside London with one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country.

Bond Dickinson recently hosted the Teesside launch of the 20th AGCC Oil & Gas Survey which revealed that the North East of England contributes almost as much to the industry as all of Scotland combined, outwith the Aberdeen area.

The survey was compiled after consultation with more than 100 UK oil and gas contractors and operators. The research by the Fraser of Allander Institute, University of Strathclyde, found that for major contracts outside Aberdeen 13% of potential suppliers were based in North East England with 15% for the rest of Scotland.

The level of interest is clear from the number of serious inquiries which the Teesside survey launch led to.

"There is variable geometry of knowledge in the North East of England about the offshore sector," said Cockburn.

"There are those who are up to speed, know the Aberdeen market inside out and are playing the game very well. Then there are others who have been involved in more mainstream engineering, construction or the marine sector who are looking at the oil and gas sector seeing it is booming and thinking they need to make sure have a slice of that pie.

"There was record investment in the North Sea last year (£14.4bn) and the decommissioning 'boom' is about to kick off. For years, studies by the likes of Aberdeen University have forecast continuing postponement of the bulk of North Sea decommissioning spend but its studies are showing that such postponement is now tailing off.

"Decom North Sea predicts that this industry could be worth £1bn or more per year and the North East of England is positioned perfectly to pick up a large slice of this work – witness Shell's recent decision to award the Brent decommissioning to the Able yard. 70% of the oil and gas platforms operating in the North Sea were built in the region and many of them could be heading back to the North East of England for dismantling. With the offshore wind industry continuing to grow, and the proximity of the region to giant offshore developments such as Dogger Bank, the future for the North East of England is bright."

2014 UK Oil and Gas Salary Survey

In August we published our 2014 UK Oil and Gas Salary Survey. The report was compiled from over 1,000 respondents, across the oil and gas sector, who completed our online survey during the first quarter of 2014. The survey is timely, as the beginning of the year is when pay reviews are announced.



Respondents worked across different levels and disciplines within their companies. Analysis is based on C-Level, Director/Senior Management, Management and Non-Management and includes those working in Technical, Operations, Commercial and Support functions.

Our large data-set allows us to understand the average salary and benefits packages people receive within the oil and gas industry. Other factors covered include the benefits regarded as important in a remuneration package, the reasons why people move jobs, as well as the methods utilised to search for a new job. Some of the highlights of the survey are detailed below.

Salary, benefits and bonuses

The average salary, excluding benefits and bonuses, received by respondents was £80,000, with salaries ranging from between £30,000 at non-management level up to £250,000 at C-Level. 89% of respondents receive some form of company benefit or bonus as part of their remuneration package. 40% of respondents receive both a company and personal bonus. Bonuses, on average, could be as high as 30% at C-Level.

Changing jobs

The intention to move jobs was also fairly consistent across the different respondent levels and disciplines. 55% of respondents were in fact planning to change jobs within the next 18 months.

Job search methods

Traditional methods of finding a job such as approaching recruiters (66%) or approaching employers directly (56%) still remain important

to candidates working within the oil and gas industry. Social networking (38%) is also an increasingly important method for job seekers.

Country Manager of our Energy Division, Anthony Broadhead, commented on the findings;

"There continues to be real optimism in the oil and gas industry, with most businesses expecting to increase permanent and contractor staffing levels in the next 12 months. Consequently, average salaries and overall benefits packages have continued to rise. We believe, however, that these inflated labour market conditions are not sustainable.

"Many companies within the sector are becoming wise to the fact that these inflated conditions, in some respects, have been made possible by industry stakeholders, such as recruiters, encouraging prospective candidates to demand more. Companies are beginning to combat this by being creative around the benefits packages they offer, in the knowledge that money perhaps isn't always the best way to attract talent.

"Certainly, the results of our survey highlight that although financial rewards remain important, there are in fact a range of other benefits that are attractive to candidates in today's market. We fully support creative approaches to incentivising prospective candidates and always make a point of advising clients on what the options are in this area."

The full report can be read and downloaded from www.nigelwright.com/energydownloads

Case study:

**Nigel Wright helps Aubin Group
improve employment brand to
attract in-demand skills**

aubin



ABOUT THE CLIENT

Established in 1986 and based in Ellon, 20 miles north of Aberdeen, Aubin Group is a chemical engineering business that specialises in the design, development and supply of chemistry-based enabling technology and engineering services to the global oil and gas industry. The business has five divisions, encompassing Aubin Subsea, Aubin Integrity, Aubin Pipelines, Aubin Well Services and Aubin Solutions.

Over the last few years the company has developed two 'game changing' gel based 'pigs' capable of cleaning pipelines which would otherwise be considered uncleanable. In addition, the company has produced a range of other innovative technologies for buoyancy, pipeline insulation and pipeline sealing. The group has increased turnover by over 35% during the last two years and plans to continue expanding rapidly, as its products and services gain further commercial adoption and traction in the market.

THE CHALLENGE

Since 2006, under the leadership of CEO Paddy Collins, Aubin Group has focused on making its products and services more commercially viable. As part of this process, in 2013, the business established a specialist Subsea division to capitalise on an anticipated market demand for its 'liquid buoyancy' products. Aubin Subsea's new technologies facilitate safe and precise placement, movement and recovery of subsea structures, unlike traditional subsea lifting and manoeuvring methods. It also offers an unprecedented level of control, enabling operations in difficult access locations.

DeepBuoy and LiquiBuoy are low-density, liquid lifting systems which adjust buoyancy levels to provide a quick and effective solution in a range of challenging subsea situations. DeepFloat is a cost effective low density buoyancy material which can be deployed as a liquid and set as a solid into any shape to provide a permanent buoyancy solution. It reduces the submerged weight of subsea equipment, pipelines, structures and provides consistent lift performance, regardless of depth.

Historically, Aubin Group had always been reactive to customer demand and even relied on other vendors' brands through which to sell its products. The business also mainly employed chemists, and in launching its subsea division, had no internal expertise within subsea engineering. Aubin Group therefore needed to establish a core subsea engineering team to help it become credible in the market as well as more consistently profitable. However, because Aubin Group had never proactively targeted the subsea operations sector before, its brand and reputation was relatively understated.

Significantly, in the highly competitive subsea engineering talent market in Aberdeen, the overriding issue was: why would in-demand subsea engineers join a small chemistry business, located 20 miles north of Aberdeen, with no background or reputation in the subsea oil and gas sector?

NIGEL WRIGHT SOLUTION

In July 2013, Nigel Wright was retained by Aubin Group to help build its subsea engineering team. In the first instance, we agreed to identify one senior subsea engineer to lead the team. We would then assist Aubin Subsea in building the team around this individual.

Our approach focused on three key areas: a talent mapping exercise to identify companies where we believed we would find candidates with the right skills and experience (this was necessary because Aubin Subsea have no competitors); utilising our broad networks within the oil and gas industry to get referrals for potential candidates (this also included identifying candidates who would consider relocating to Aberdeen); utilising internal marketing resources to create a microsite and candidate pack to support the recruitment process, aiding candidate engagement by articulating the story and potential of Aubin Group.

Our campaign was focused on raising the employment brand of Aubin Group, by explaining to the market why Aubin Group was an 'employer of choice' within the subsea sector. We sought to leverage the fact that this was a unique opportunity to work for a new division within a highly innovative company. Although Aubin Group was a small business, it was at the very early stages of a potentially rapid period of growth, due to the ground breaking technology the business had developed.

In identifying the lead engineer for the team, we highlighted to potential candidates the opportunity this presented to build and develop a team of engineers from scratch. From an engineering perspective, working within Aubin's subsea division meant the chance to take concepts from the design and testing stage through to full build and operation; both of these critical factors, we argued, were rare opportunities in a market dominated by big companies with large teams, where working on or managing project specific areas, rather than the full engineering process, is common.

So far, Nigel Wright has been instrumental in identifying the engineering lead plus several additional team members for Aubin Group, including Engineers, a Business Line Manager and a Senior Projects Manager. For each assignment, there were four shortlisted candidates. All candidates were successfully identified using a combination of the three methods outlined above. Our employer branding campaign was successful in persuading these individuals that Aubin Group was a business worth considering. The successful candidates could have joined any of the big subsea companies in Aberdeen, but chose instead to join Aubin Group.

On the back of these campaigns, Nigel Wright's partnership with Aubin Group continues today.

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

Nigel Wright started working with Aubin Group in mid-2013 and since then has essentially built our subsea engineering team from scratch. The consultants went to great lengths to really understand our business and culture and used this information to effectively promote our brand to the oil and gas market, raising our reputation as an employer of choice.

We genuinely believe we now have some of the best subsea engineers in the market working for us, giving our division real credibility moving forward. Nigel Wright has found Aubin Group some truly exceptional people in a very competitive market, and got them to work for a very small business when they could have gone anywhere.

Employer branding: More important today than ever before

In an increasingly competitive global marketplace, attracting and retaining the right kind of talent is central to a company's ability to grow.

A strong employer brand can be a powerful business tool that can connect an organisation's values, people strategy and HR policies to the corporate brand. If in previous years, employer brand development was synonymous with recruitment advertising, today over 59% of employers say that employer branding represents one of the key components of the organisation's overall HR strategy.

There are many definitions for employer branding but they all essentially seek to explain a company's ability to differentiate itself from competitors through a unique Employee Value Proposition (EVP). A strong EVP will communicate the company values in a way that highlights what makes that workplace unique and attractive to individuals sharing the same values. As employer brands are based on intangible factors such as image, identity, and perception, being able to discover what it is about a brand that creates an emotional inclination and a sense of identification with the company, can prove invaluable to employers.

The best place to start exploring what motivates people to join a particular organisation, why they stay and why they leave is internal feedback. Existing data from employee feedback, employee engagement and culture surveys, focus groups, employee forums, new hire surveys or exit interviews can often paint a good picture of the prospective and existing employees' experiences.

According to one industry report, the number of companies measuring, analysing and developing strategies based on 'brand attractiveness' is on the rise; as many as 39% of businesses are expected to increase investment in employment branding strategy this year.

In 2008, Nigel Wright teamed up with researchers from Durham Business School to find out what attracted talented managerial and professional employees to particular organisations, and what elements of an employer brand are important to them. To read the full report, please visit www.nigelwright.com/energydownloads

CURRENT TRENDS AND BEST PRACTICE

Candidate equals customer

In order to attract the right people, employers today need to create a positive 'customer' experience for candidates throughout the recruitment process. If candidates are treated in a way that makes them feel valued, the employer will benefit in a number of ways. For instance, candidates often spread the word about their experience to their peer group, and the quality of their experience and the opinion they form of an employer will determine whether or not they will recommend a company further.

Building a talent community

Often, candidates who apply for certain roles and are unsuccessful might prove suitable for future positions, which is why it is crucial for employers to build and maintain a talent community. By creating a good impression and maintaining relationships following the recruitment process, businesses can keep a talent bench active, which can only constitute an advantage.

Social and visual revolution

Social media has had a profound effect on employer branding, revolutionising the way we search and apply for jobs, assess our prospective employers, and communicate in the workplace.

If in the past, companies' claims would rarely get publicly contested, social media now offers a platform for current and prospective employees to voice their own views and paint a more realistic picture of the workplace. Channels such as Facebook, Glassdoor and Payscale in particular are now useful tools for candidates to research and assess an employer's offering, and organisations must therefore ensure that recruitment messages align with employee perceptions.

For employers, social media has made it possible to build and maintain a large talent pool faster than ever before. LinkedIn remains recruiters' preferred social channel for finding, contacting

and keeping track of candidates (94%), while Facebook (65%) and Twitter (55%) are used by businesses to showcase the employer brand. However, platforms such as YouTube, Pinterest and Instagram are gaining increased popularity with employers, who now use them to share easily consumable video and infographics and create engagement with candidates. From global giants such as Apple, Google and Intel, to smaller companies such as Innocent and Hubspot, videos are becoming increasingly powerful tools for communicating companies' organisational culture and the main things they look for in prospective employees.

Furthermore, although social media also has the potential to facilitate internal brand communication, the emphasis on this aspect (building employee engagement, searching for brand ambassadors on social media) is still fairly limited amongst employers.

According to PiB and CRFI, almost a third of employers are now planning to work less with recruitment companies and focus more on social media recruitment. However, although it is important to build a strong digital presence, it is impossible to build an entire employer brand online as undoubtedly, the quality of individual relationships and the value of specialist industry knowledge are still key factors in attracting the best talent. To read our report on social media recruitment, please visit

www.nigelwright.com/energydownloads

Planning for change

Having an adaptable employer branding strategy is becoming increasingly important in today's competitive landscape. Changing employment trends mean that companies need to stay agile and more aware of the social environment than ever before. As the number of temporary workers has increased dramatically over the past decade, HR teams face the challenge of building a common culture across companies, creating a sense of belonging for all employees.

Furthermore, rapidly evolving technology is constantly reinventing the world of recruitment. With 20% of all recruitment searches now made using a mobile device, investment in responsive design and mobile marketing has increased considerably.

HOW WE CAN HELP

When an assignment merits a creative search solution, our in house marketing and design team will manage the whole process for you. This includes developing campaigns and designing content, through to media planning and mailing out or placing advertisements. We also regularly create candidate packs and client microsites for our clients. These are intended to highlight career opportunities and provide greater insight into what it's like working for our clients.

Advertising

To ensure that the candidate attraction process is effectively executed it's really important that information concerning financial packages, job specifications, pension arrangements and relocation requirements are communicated clearly. Our in-house team can ensure that this side of your recruitment project is taken care of through producing first-rate clear and concise messages, tailored to your needs.

Candidate packs

Typically these contain detailed information about the company, its place in the market, its culture, the role, location, package and much more. These packs are tangible items which create a point of difference in the marketplace and have proved to be highly effective for strategically important recruitment assignments.

Client microsites

In addition to or to complement a candidate pack we also offer our clients a detailed microsite, hosted on our own website. This follows a proven template to ensure that potential candidates are able to get a full picture of the role and the company.

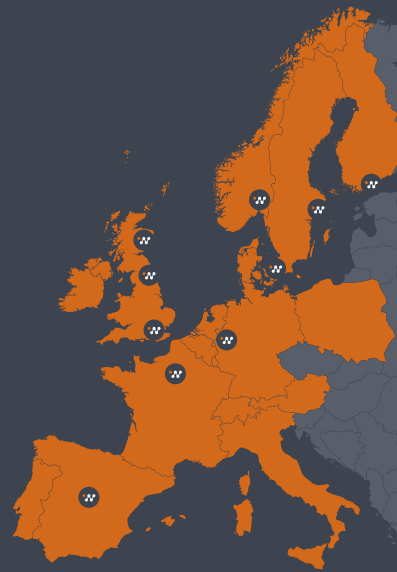
For more information about our marketing services contact the Nigel Wright marketing team at marketingdept@nigelwright.com



About Nigel Wright Energy

Nigel Wright Energy is a trusted recruitment partner to the global oil and gas sector. Our clients are diverse and range from local niche suppliers to multi-national, global leaders. Founded in 1988 in Newcastle upon Tyne, we now have established offices in Aberdeen, London, Paris, Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Düsseldorf and Madrid.

energy.nigelwright.com



OUR CAPABILITY

Nigel Wright Energy provide insight across a broad range of sub-sectors and disciplines within the global oil and gas industry. We give our clients the opportunity to access the best talent globally and we can add value by offering tactical advice that goes beyond the recruitment process. We see our involvement with your company as a strategic business alliance, helping you to assemble an exceptional team through effective recruitment activities and additional consultancy services.

INTERNATIONAL REACH

Nigel Wright Energy is well positioned to support the global oil and gas industry through its network of offices in Newcastle upon Tyne, Aberdeen, London, Paris, Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Düsseldorf and Madrid.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Our consultants have strategic relationships with key contacts that extend over a number of years. This, in addition to our regional offices, gives us an in-depth knowledge of your local, national and international talent pool.

NIGEL WRIGHT

OIL AND GAS SECTOR SPECIALISTS

We work across the whole Oil and Gas project life cycle, from exploration and production to decommissioning and abandonment. Our clients are involved in all of the major oil and gas sub-sectors covering Reservoirs, Wells, Facilities, Subsea, Marine and Support Services. They are spread throughout the supply chain and range from publicly listed global operators to private, equity backed SMEs and start-ups.

ALL FORMS OF RECRUITMENT

We offer our clients a blend of specific services to suit their needs such as Executive Search, Preferred Supplier Solutions (PSS), Contract, Campaign Management and Talent Mapping as well as consulting on employer branding, press and online web advertising campaigns.

SALARY LEVEL

We recruit on a permanent and interim basis from professionally qualified to executive board level. All projects would be managed by a senior consultant, manager or director, where applicable.

Office network



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