Case Study

SmartRecruiters Inc. chooses Docmosis for a critical component of its HR SaaS.

SmartRecruiters
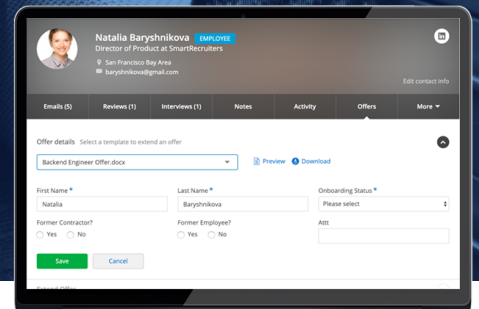
Industry:
Human Resources

Product:
Docmosis Cloud (2015-2019)
Docmosis-Java (2017 onwards)

Time to production:
5 months

Number of Templates:
100,000+

Used in production:
Since 2015

"Docmosis allowed us to end up with a robust, sophisticated and very flexible solution..."

**Michal Nowak
Director of Software Development**

SmartRecruiters

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BACKGROUND

SmartRecruiters Inc. has developed a SaaS recruiting platform used by mid-market to large multi-national companies to find, engage, and hire employees.

CEO Jerome Ternynck founded SmartRecruiters in 2010 with the vision of maximizing the use of digital technology to make hiring easy for large companies. Investor interest in his tech company has been significant, with $56 million raised so far to fund the evolutionary development of the SmartRecruiters solution.

Over the years, the SmartRecruiters product has evolved into a complete hiring solution. The company's innovative use of technology includes an AI virtual recruiting assistant, an integrated applicant tracking CRM, and the extensive use of social media. The software also connects to high profile job websites and third-party hiring tools.

SmartRecruiters' competitive use of technology has contributed to its significant market growth and recognition as a global leader in recruitment. In 2017, the company doubled its revenue, with 96% of its customers renewing their subscriptions. By 2018, over 3,000 companies worldwide were using the platform to hire staff. The majority of these companies are significant in scale, with hundreds of thousands of employees working in different countries, and they include top global brands like IKEA, Bosch, LinkedIn, and Visa.

THE PROBLEM

The team at SmartRecruiters recognized that the creation of job offer letters was a critical component of the hiring process. Every potential new hire needed a customized and personalized job offer letter.

Yet, from 2011 through to 2014, users had to leave the SmartRecruiters platform in order to create the job offer letters. This was not ideal, given SmartRecruiters' desire to provide their customers with a complete hiring solution.
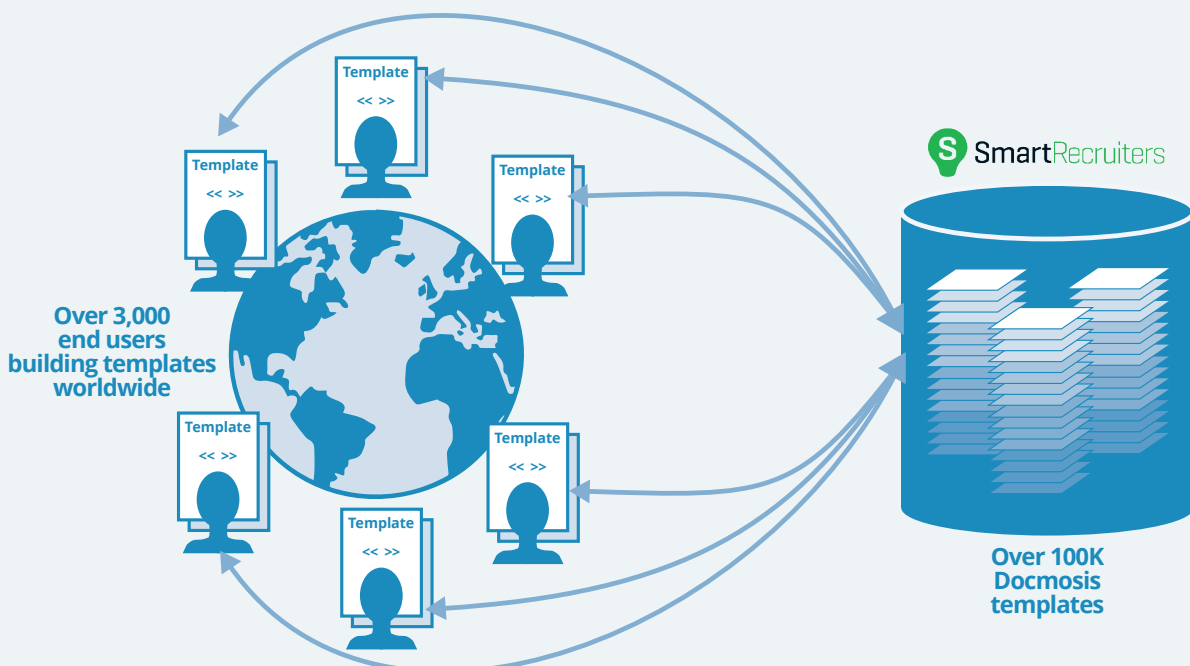
In 2014, Director of Software Development, Michał Nowak, was tasked with adding the offer letter generation feature to the SmartRecruiters platform. Michał explains, "We wanted to make it easier and save time for customers by keeping them in the system."

Michał realized that it would be a challenging undertaking, as it was not a simple case of populating a 'standard' offer letter with personal data relevant to the prospective employee. Says Michał, "Offer letters are very different from company to company. Some of them are quite complex." He was aware that every company would have its own layout for the offer letters, along with the unique terms and conditions of employment offered by that company.

Michał and his software engineering team contemplated building the functionality in-house. Says Michał, "We found document generation to be a complex task, with a lot of quirks and interesting problems lurking there. It's definitely something that requires specialization, skills, and knowledge." He knew that it would be a time-consuming task for his team to develop the solution, which would then need continuous maintenance and frequent tweaks to accommodate their customers' document formatting requirements.

Desiring a faster solution with little to no in-house maintenance, the SmartRecruiters engineering team began their search for a suitable document generation product.

"We found document generation to be a complex task, with lots of quirks and interesting problems lurking there. It's definitely something that requires specialization, skills, and knowledge..."

Over 3,000 end users building templates worldwide

Template << >>

Template << >>

Template << >>

Template << >>

Template << >>

Template << >>

Template << >>

SmartRecruiters

Over 100K Docmosis templates

> *"When we compared vendors, we found Docmosis to be simple to use, better tailored to our needs and the pricing was competitive..."*

THE SOLUTION

Michał notes that in seeking a product to provide letter generation, they had three main requirements: uploading of Microsoft® Word templates; generating PDF documents from the templates; and a simple way of creating merge fields. Furthermore, Michał adds, "We needed a robust PDF generation tool that could support different versions of Microsoft® Word and LibreOffice."

"When we compared vendors, it became obvious that Docmosis could do exactly what we wanted," says Michał. The final consensus came after their trial of Docmosis Cloud. Michał reports, "We found it simple to use, better tailored to our needs, and the pricing was competitive."

In early 2015, the Docmosis Cloud solution was integrated into the SmartRecruiters platform. Says Michał, "It was a perfect way for us to start, as we could get up and running very quickly, and we didn't have to set it up on our machines. It was a matter of calling the Docmosis Cloud API from our application. We were very happy with this initial integration, and the support we received was exceptional."

As SmartRecruiters grew and acquired larger and larger customers, they faced ever stricter security requirements, until they received formal requirements to move the offer letter generation process in-house. Says Michał, "It was a big problem, but fortunately Docmosis could also be used on-premise. The engineering team was delighted that we could use the same templating engine on our own servers."

The transition over to Docmosis-Java was a big decision, and SmartRecruiters purchased a Docmosis-Java license near the end of 2017. As Michał points out, "Moving Docmosis on-premise was a complex task requiring a lot more knowledge."

The switch from the Cloud to the Java product also presented new challenges for the SmartRecruiters team, as there were tens of thousands of templates involved. Differences in the templating features available between the Cloud and Java versions affected the display of some of the generated letters. Says Michał, "We had to make sure the letters would look the same with the on-premise version. Fortunately, we were constantly in contact with the Docmosis support and engineering teams. They were answering a lot of questions and helping us along the way, giving us tips and providing help to successfully move to the on-premise installation."

THE RESULT

Michał believes offer letter generation to be a critical component of the SmartRecruiters platform. "It provides us with a competitive advantage as it is an important feature for any company that wants to purchase recruiting software. It helps us win more deals and acquire more customers."

SmartRecruiters now supports hundreds of thousands of letter templates for their enterprise customers. "The vast majority of our customers can use the offer letter generation feature on their own. We provide a basic template as an example and a robust help system," says Michał.

Their customers' familiarity with Microsoft Word® means they are comfortable adding candidate-specific merge fields and other design elements. The SmartRecruiters user interface allows users to upload their templates and generate the offer letters, with the dynamic content pulled from data within the applicant tracking CRM.

Over the past couple of years, Michał says that his engineering team has been building up their knowledge and skills around Docmosis, which means they can usually help their customers with the more 'intricately formatted templates'. For those rare occasions when his team is stumped, they consult the Docmosis support team. Says Michał, "They are very responsive and always happy to help."

Michał is confident that his team made the right decision to go with Docmosis-Java over building an on-premise system themselves. "I'd advise anyone who thinks about building the functionality in-house that it is not that simple." Michał adds that if his team had built the solution in-house, "we'd probably lose a month every year supporting it. Now all that effort has been transferred to the Docmosis team. Right now, it's just completely hassle-free, fire and forget, so we can focus on other areas."

Michał reflects, "We were happy with both decisions. To start with, the Cloud version was quick to set up and hassle-free to operate." As their circumstances changed with increased usage and larger customers, the on-premise version proved to be "robust and sophisticated, allowing us to configure everything the way we wanted."

SmartRecruiters sees no reason to change their document generation tool. Michał concludes, "We ended up with a very flexible solution where we can control the underlying infrastructure and scale the service easily."

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