

Harrods

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employment services

Harrods Case study



Company Overview

The Harrods Distribution Centre (TVDC) opened in Thatcham in 2012 and is a vital part of the Harrods success story. With over 340,000 square feet of bespoke warehouse space, it is the heart of their international distribution service and a key cog in ensuring a seamless experience for Harrods customers.

In readiness for the TVDC going live, Harrods invited a number of specialist employment agencies to tender to become their chosen supplier to support their seasonal uplifts. Following a rigorous process Harrods placed an incredible amount of trust in Abacus and chose us as their preferred supplier, ten years on Abacus are still their chosen supplier.



Brief

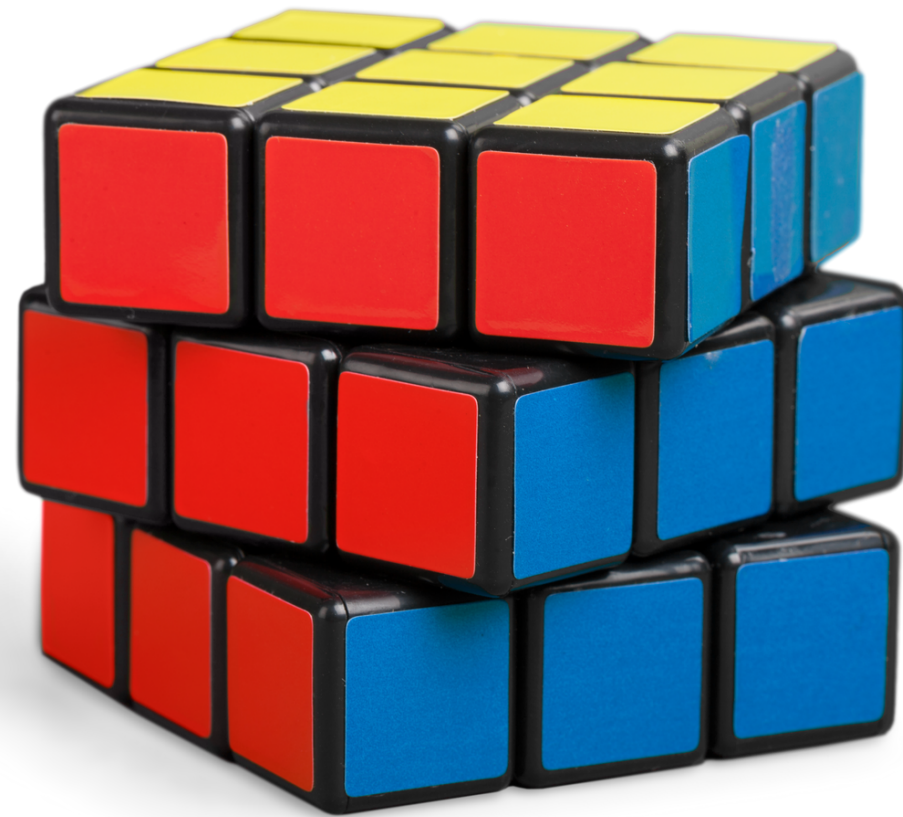


As the World's Leading luxury retailer and an employer of several thousand people, Harrods are committed to ensuring that high standards and sustainability are always at the heart of their values. The business has grown in size and the operation has evolved significantly since the TVDC opened in 2012. The retail market has seen dramatic changes to how a customer shops and in particular the explosion of online shopping. This has meant that Harrods have had to grow, innovate and adapt. The introduction in 2014 of the .com fulfilment operation in TVDC and the significant investment they have made following the installation of their automated packing machine has meant that they are able to meet customer demand and they now boast one of the most proficient and modern Distribution Centres in Europe.

Harrods have needed to resource in large numbers both temporary and permanent staff to meet customer demands, to be specific:

- Harrods seasonal peaks see a requirement of in excess of 300 temporary workers to be resourced and onboarded. Each new employee plays a vital part in the success of the Distribution centre.
- Permanent Headcount has also increased and continues to do so. In today's competitive market with an ever-decreasing pool of labour, this presents many challenges.

Solution



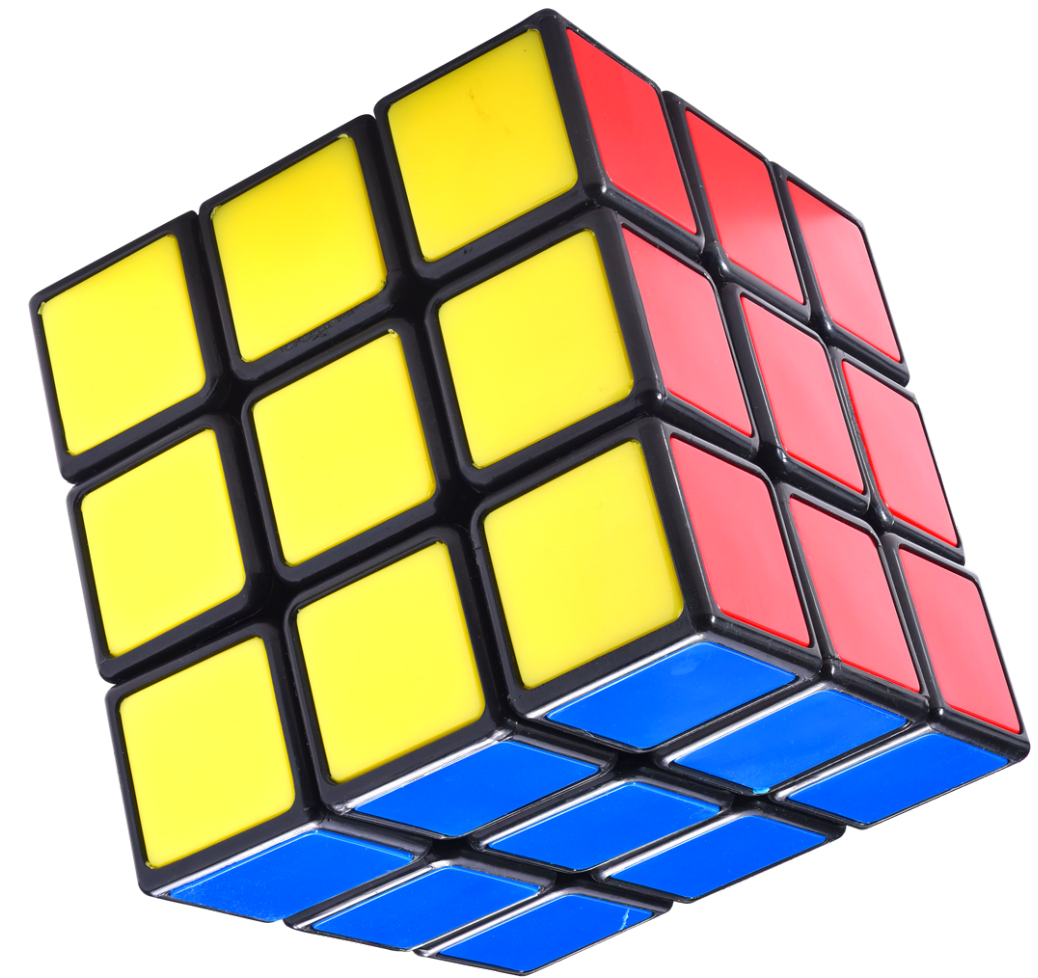
- With over 30 years' of experience in the local industrial and distribution market in Newbury and Thatcham, our reputation and brand profile are unmatched. We collaborated closely with the Harrods Senior Management team to develop a recruitment plan, gradually increasing headcount in a controlled and sustainable manner.
- To find the most suitable candidates, we established a dedicated team of Multi-lingual resources focused on local markets. Our personal approach sets us apart, while streamlined processes ensure compliance. Partnering with a marketing company and leveraging job boards have been crucial in attracting new workers, alongside our strong word-of-mouth reputation.
- Onboarding and supporting new staff have been priorities. We have conducted regular on-site inductions, offered guidance, and implemented incentive schemes to maintain staff levels and reduce turnover. Ongoing communication with the Harrods team has allowed us to stay on track and address challenges honestly and transparently, without overcommitting.
- Additionally, our network of branches has proven advantageous. When the local market was saturated, we tapped into a new area, following the same rigorous recruitment process.
- By combining our industry expertise, personal touch, and strategic collaborations, we have successfully built a strong workforce for Harrods, adapting to market fluctuations and ensuring a reliable supply of qualified staff.

Results

To date Abacus continue to be the main supplier for Harrods TVDC, having increased our temporary headcount on site to 300 + staff at peak times dependent on client demand. We work closely with Senior management at Harrods to ensure that each peak is planned for accordingly - it's a partnership where we work together to ensure that the correct staffing is in place so that Harrods can meet their customer demands and their SLA's.

Latest statistics

- 2021 Abacus placed 132 permanent staff in Harrods TVDC
- 2021 We covered 20,642 shifts with seasonal labour
- 2021 Our staff worked a combined total of 154,548 hours
- Harrods have had their most successful on line trading year on record





“As General Manager of the Harrods Distribution Centre, partnering with a recruitment company that we can trust and rely upon is crucial. We have worked with Abacus for the past 10 years, they understand our business, our seasonal peaks and most importantly they are here when we need them and they deliver. Our seasonal demands fluctuate – often at very short notice, we also have to respond to varying conditions and legislation which is sometimes very much out of our control. Working with Abacus has really helped to ease the pressure and I feel confident that they are always available, providing an honest service. Our business success is as important to them as it is to us”.

John Lacey, General Manager TVDC



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