

PRESS RELEASE

Rialto Recruitment | IMSA Belgium | Atlantae Executive Search combines regional expansion with international exposure

Patrick Van Lijsebetten, CEO Rialto Recruitment: "Further regional expansion combined with international cross border search assignments, strengthen our position as specialized executive search boutique"

NIEL, BELGIUM, April 18, 2018 – Further regional and international expansion plans were presented at the IMSA's annual conference in Vienna.

Rialto Recruitment NV, being IMSA's official and exclusive Belgian partner, is committed to further regional expansion. Recently, the executive search boutique opened a 2nd office at C-Mine Crib in Genk. Even before the summer holidays, it will inaugurate an antenna in East or West Flanders. In the slightly longer term but before the year end, the expansion of a presence below the language border is on the agenda. Through its entry in 2016 into the international executive search network IMSA, Rialto Recruitment assures itself of a greater strength for cross-border assignments as well, in both directions. Executive Search assignments were carried out for international customers in the Netherlands, Poland, France, Germany.

Rialto Recruitment specializes since 2001 in the executive search of higher technical profiles (engineers, IT staff, Ph.D's, bachelors, ...). Under its brand name Atlantae Executive Search, search mandates for CxO level profiles and board members take an important position. However, it has only been doing so since the beginning of 2016 under its current name. It is known that a company in development sometimes makes strange turns.

In 2001, current CEO Patrick Van Lijsebetten, Master of Science in electronics, was at the cradle of the executive search firm Atlantae founded by 2 partners, because of the tendency towards independent entrepreneurship on the one hand, and dissatisfaction during his professional career in industrial circles with the services of the existing search companies on the other hand, especially when it concerned a search for higher-skilled technical profiles. Since 2001, Atlantae knows how to systematically grow through the years. In 2010 Patrick Van Lijsebetten acquired the sole control of the company. Not for long, however, because a few years later, a joint venture took place between EgeminPlus (contingency recruitment company for engineering profiles), and Atlantae, precisely because of its specialization in and focus on "executive search" of technical profiles. Patrick Van Lijsebetten, however, was being asked by the new Board of Directors to expand both EgeminPlus and Atlantae. A short time later, he is appointed CEO of both companies.

The 3 following years, the foundation was laid for the current Rialto Recruitment. For example, the traditional approach of EgeminPlus was broadened in technical terms with executive search and headhunting, all non-technical assignments and less demanding profiles have been divested, the office in Brussels for temporary staffing assignments was closed and these activities were stopped. Instead, a scaling up in CxO level profiles became a key priority. In addition to the technical profiles, the company started to focus on the search for management and board level profiles as well as external forces for boards of directors and advisory boards. Being a GUBERNA certified director himself, Patrick Van Lijsebetten is well placed to attract directors who have corporate governance principles in their genes.

The crisis years not only had a serious impact on the executive and direct search market, but also in the tandem EgeminPlus / Atlantae profound changes occurred. For example, Egemin (one of the EgeminPlus shareholders) was split up. The activities in logistics became Dematic. The Process Automation, Life Sciences, Infra Automation and Consulting & Services divisions started a new life being part of Agidens International. For Ackermans & van Haaren, reference shareholder of Agidens, EgeminPlus and Atlantae were no longer "core". Both companies were put in the shop window and sold in January 2016 to ... Patrick Van Lijsebetten.

EgeminPlus was renamed Rialto Recruitment whereas Atlantae was recently encapsulated within Rialto and is only retained as a brand name to specialize in CxO level search. The focus clearly defined by Patrick Van Lijsebetten for both entities at the time is, however, maintained and strengthened.

With the company name Rialto, Van Lijsebetten not only refers to the well-known bridge in Venice, which clearly indicates that *"the company wants to build a bridge between universities of applied sciences, universities and industry on the one hand, employees and employers on the other. Furthermore, Rialto strives for a bridging function for the candidates in the development of their professional careers by facilitating their transition to other companies"*.

In September 2016, Rialto Recruitment exchanged its offices in the Egemin office in Antwerp for a new base in the Science Park of the University of Antwerp in Niel. Patrick Van Lijsebetten: "In fact, a Science Park also creates a better image. But with our branch in Niel we emphasize our bond as a highly specialized executive-search office for technically highly educated people with the academic institutions".

Regional Expansion

Rialto Recruitment wanted to continue this strategy even further. Last November 2017, the executive search agency opened a 2nd office in C-Mine Crib in Genk, the Limburg technology incubator for the creative industry, for its operations in Limburg and Dutch (south of the Netherlands) market. Meanwhile Rialto Recruitment has concrete plans for the establishment of a third branch for the operation of the East Flemish and West Flemish market. After some insistence, it appears that the search for a possible location mainly focuses on the Ghent or Kortrijk region, where - not coincidentally - important technological and academic clusters are also working.

In the longer term, but still this year, Patrick Van Lijsebetten also wants a base for the operation of Wallonia, the French-speaking region in Belgium. In line with the company strategy, it seems obvious that the region around Louvain-La-Neuve will be placed on top of the agenda for this.

International Growth

International expansion is next on the agenda, being better armed for cross-border assignments with international and corporate (multinational) clients. Through its own strategy and well-defined focus, Rialto Recruitment has managed to position itself within the executive search market which large internationally-structured clients. Becoming part of the IMSA network in 2016, globally operating clients can be served within 23 countries spread over 5 continents.

During the IMSA international conference that took place last week (Vienna 11-13th April 2018), executive search strategies and markets economics were exchanged amongst members, and also three new members were elected by all other existing members and the boards. As from this week, we are proud to welcome our colleagues from IMSA Czech Republic, IMSA Norway, and IMSA Hungary. All members look forward to a fruitful international cooperation where search assignments were already discussed. Discussions with even more new members are planned the next weeks to come, hopefully joining our network during the next October conference.

All search assignments are carried out with respect for deontology and diversity, and on the basis of a quality approach. Last year (July 2017), Rialto Recruitment obtained the latest Lloyd's certified RSS quality certificate from the Federgon professional federation for Recruitment, Search & Selection agencies in Belgium.

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