

Partners in performance

Delivery beyond the extra mile

"We have established firm footings over the past 15 years and our partnership with Investec has developed fantastically well. As we set about achieving the next phase of our growth, we are excited about taking the business forward with the right funding partner by our side. We would have absolutely no hesitation in recommending Investec to other businesses looking to expand and grow."

Rob Webb, Chief Executive Officer, Smart Solutions (Recruitment) Limited



About Smart Solutions (Recruitment) Limited

Smart Solutions Group was founded in 2007 with a recruitment branch in Pontypool South Wales. It has since become one of the UK's leading recruitment agencies for temporary recruitment. Smart Solutions (Recruitment) Ltd (SSR) provides bespoke sector-specific contract recruitment services for the Industrial and specialist waste and recycling sectors. The business is run by recruitment expert, CEO, Robert Webb alongside FD, Steve Mills. Today, Smart Solutions Recruitment employs c. 200 staff, HQ in Cardiff, with offices across the UK including Manchester, Leeds, Stoke, Birmingham, Leicester and Swansea. The business has two divisions, Smart Workforce Solutions, which provides specialist industrial recruitment services and Smart Environmental Support Services, which is a leading labour provider to the waste and recycling sector.



The challenge

Smart Solutions has been on a fast growth curve since its inception and had outgrown both its facility and its relationship with the previous lender. As such, the management team found itself actively looking for a new funding partner that would take the time to understand its business journey and get behind its growth aspirations.

Rob Webb, Chief Executive Officer, Smart Solutions (Recruitment) Limited, said: "As a very fast-moving business, having a dynamic working capital facility is pivotal. We pay our workers weekly but have to wait an average of 38 days to get paid by our customers. In extreme cases, payment can take up to 105 days, which creates a significant cash flow lag.

We're very tight on debt management and credit control, however, with a growing £10 million plus debtor book, having a flexible facility that can bridge the gap and expand with our sales is critical. To us, finding the right funding partner and establishing the right relationship was every bit as vital as the facility itself."



Investec's solution

Having received the introduction to Smart Solutions, Investec looked to quickly gain a detailed understanding of the business, how it operates and its key objectives. They responded by delivering a flexible £15m working capital facility and completing the transaction to meet a very tight timescale. This supportive approach not only provided the management team with the certainty of funding and deal execution but also enabled them to gain a relationship with a long-term funding partner committed to supporting their growth.

Rob Webb picked up: "What we got from Investec right from the start was a strong feeling of partnership. It was important for us to work with a funder that can offer us the capacity for growth and we've certainly found that with Investec. The Investec Capital Solutions team has been incredible in moving with us at pace to support our ambitions."

Time was of the essence in respect of the transaction and Rob Webb

highlighted that this was reflected in Investec's responsive approach throughout the deal process: "Investec didn't just go the extra mile, they ran the extra marathon for us. We were really up against it and had an incredibly skinny window to get the deal done. While they were as diligent as they needed to be, they were also extremely accommodating, working around our schedules and taking calls at all times of the day and evening to get the job done."

He continued: "Investec's team was invested in our business in every respect. They quickly assimilated the knowledge of our growth trajectory and seasonal pinch points, structured the right deal with our CFO and pulled out all the stops to accelerate our programme to meet the tight deadline involved."

Outcome

Rob Webb explained that in the current labour market people remain a scarce commodity and that volume recruitment is more competitive than ever. However, with a new and committed funding partner in Investec and funding capacity created specifically to encourage growth, he sees very exciting opportunities ahead through sustainably building a high-profile, blue-chip customer base.

He concluded: "We have established firm footings over the past 15 years and our partnership with Investec has developed fantastically well. As we set about achieving the next phase of our growth, we are excited about taking the business forward with the right funding partner by our side. We would have absolutely no hesitation in recommending Investec to other businesses looking to expand and grow."

"Investec didn't just go the extra mile, they ran the extra marathon for us. We were really up against it and had an incredibly skinny window to get the deal done. While they were as diligent as they needed to be, they were also incredibly accommodating, working around our schedules and taking calls at all times of the day and evening to get the job done."

Rob Webb, Chief Executive Officer, Smart Solutions (Recruitment) Limited

Contact

investec.com/workingcapital

workingcapital@investec.com

020 7597 5936

We're a solutions-led corporate and investment banking business who provide capital and innovative ideas to growth-orientated companies, private equity and institutional investors across markets and sectors.



Investec Capital Solutions Limited is a subsidiary of Investec Bank plc. Investec Bank plc whose registered office is at 30 Gresham Street, London EC2V 7QP is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority, registered no 172330.

