

# The Re-branded Recruiter can rely on Invenias as they prepare for the future



- Headquartered in the UK with an extensive international footprint
- Over 30 years experience of placing people in key positions
- A company committed to equality: CEO Sue O'Brien awarded an OBE for services to Gender Equality in January 2014
- Practice areas include; Consumer, Private Equity, Financial Services, Energy & Natural Resources, Life Sciences & Healthcare, Leisure & Travel, Retail, Professional Services, Technology, Media & Telecoms

## Norman Broadbent's CEO talks about turning around the brand, recruiting new people and embracing technology.

Today, and for decades, Norman Broadbent has been renowned and respected for the insight offered by its employees. However, five years ago this was not the case. In 2008, as current CEO Sue O'Brien says, the business had lost its way; "it had been shrunk to a core team that was still delivering excellent work for a very minimal number of clients, and therefore should really have been a standalone partnership."

Seeing an opportunity, Garner acquired the company to re-launch it as a PLC. O'Brien says: "The strategy behind acquiring the business was largely around wanting to get a brand that had good recognition at board level, it had a very fond remembrance in the minds of executives that had either been placed by the organisation or had indeed enjoyed some of the insights, skills and advice that the people within the business had delivered in its heyday which would've been probably 15 years earlier."

Having got the name, O'Brien and her team went about turning it round, to have it seen, once again, as a contender; "hiring was interesting. There were a number of people in the first year that would never dream of working with us because they felt it was a tired brand. Within a 12-to-24-month period most of those people were saying "can I come and have a coffee?" So the ability to really turn around the brand and create it as a challenger worked exceptionally well, but we are probably just as fussy about who we hire for ourselves as we are about who we help clients hire."

Having put the Norman Broadbent name back on the map and brought in a highly regarded team Sue and the company could focus on the tools they use. And as they started to look for international growth, executive search software provider, Invenias, allowed the company to guarantee all its offices would be kept in the loop, regardless of location.

"One of the things that was important when we started to look at Invenias, as we were going through international growth I wanted a real time system that was cloud based, so if we were going to open in a new location, or if we were going to look at agile working, and home working it would be something that we could look at doing very easily.

"That was absolutely key for us because we were going to be working on the same clients, across a number of geographies with a number of offices, if you work in a silo, you don't need that, we don't work in silos so we need the real time info, so for Norman Broadbent it was crucial."

"It's an additional tool we use that gives us an edge, if you look at the US, if we're in the west coast in LA, if you look at the time difference, I couldn't have a system that didn't have a live update, if they're addressing stuff overnight,

when I wake up the next morning and they're in bed, I could accidentally phone the same candidate about something else if we didn't have a live system so if you have a global business that operates the way we do you need to have that coverage.

O'Brien says as well as helping with the company's geographical reach, it has also proved to be effective for multiple parts of the business.

"The beauty about the Invenias system is you can utilise it for the executive search model where it's all about the intensity and insight of one individual, but then it can equally be as efficient for Arcus Global Partners (a Norman Broadbent sister company) which is actually about a broad, generic database, of a number of people but similarity of data."

And, perhaps most importantly, Invenias has also allowed the company to be prepared for the future. With a world that is only becoming more reliant on technology, Invenias has helped Norman Broadbent prepare for changes in the market rather than find a solution after a change has occurred.

"There are a swathe of board executives that are probably much more technologically savvy than they ever expected to be five or ten years ago. For me, in leading a business you have to anticipate the market. Not react to it."

"That's why Invenias, for me, meant anticipating what the market would move to at a point when most others were saying that digital life will never permeate in the executive search world, that's nonsense."

"I run a business that is in executive search, I need to make sure that I've got a digital answer to my business irrespective of a traditional view of what we do for a living."

This article is taken from HR Grapevine | October 2013



Sue O'Brien OBE  
CEO

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## invenias

- Designed for executive search firms, strategic recruitment companies and enterprise recruitment organizations
- Enabling effective delivery of assignments, stronger relationships with clients and candidates and transformation of the productivity of search operations
- Easy to use cloud-based desktop and mobile applications
- Invenias serves thousands of users in over fifty countries across the globe

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