

PASSION

SUMMER 2024

MASTER
YOUR
MAGIC

Employer branding
campaign: beautiful
packaging with impact

#FamilySpirit

EIFFAGE
 SMULDERS



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FOREWORD

Challenging & growing businesses

We are still very touched and saddened by the fatal accident at the Hoboken site, where a worker lost his life. Our thoughts and support go out to colleagues, friends and family. Safety and risk management are always a priority for a company like Smulders. In a manufacturing environment, hazards are never far away. We will never stop communicating about safety, you can be sure of that. In May, we had another audit under the safety culture ladder. It is with mixed feelings that I can tell you that we achieved level 4 (of 5).

Substations in sneltreinvaart

On the one hand, the market is clear: substation requests are going at the speed of light. On the other hand, we predict delays in foundations for 2025-2026. For 2025, the order book is well-filled, although we will build fewer foundations than we are used to. We are also trying to enter the HVDC market. We are talking to major distribution companies to build converter projects – 2 large jackets have already been commissioned.

Lopende projecten & updates

- **Vlissingen:** successful first load out and construction of new quay.
- **Balen:** capacity of platform line doubled.
- **Hoboken:** full availability of neighbouring site from 2025.
- **Newcastle:** first TP project successfully completed.
- **Poland:** gantry cranes ready to handle containers ahead of projects in the US starting in 2026-2027.
- **Fos-sur-Mer:** progress in floating project.
- **Renfrew bridge:** beautiful pillar bridge arrived in Glasgow.
- **Darmstadt:** fully assembled, new assemblies starting in Duisburg and Amsterdam.

You can read it, you can feel it: our firm is growing strongly. Our team is committed to keeping this growth manageable for everyone. We are fully engaged in recruitment to help realise the expansion of electromechanical systems. We are committed to the success of your projects. Many hands make masterwork.

On behalf of the entire management,
Raf Iemants
Managing Director Smulders

NEWS



Dutch-Belgian joint venture designs and builds high-voltage substations for world's first energy island

The HSI Joint Venture consisting of HSM Offshore Energy, Smulders and Iv has been awarded the Modular Offshore Grid 2 (MOG2) contract for Princess Elisabeth Island, the world's first artificial energy island off the Belgian coast by transmission system operator Elia.

The EPCIC (Engineering, Procurement, Construction & Installation and Commissioning) contract includes the further design and construction of 4 high-voltage substations (2 x 1050 megawatts, 2 x 700 megawatts), a facility module and a garage. The construction of the high-voltage substations is scheduled to begin in May 2025.

Smulders attains level 4 of the Safety Culture Ladder

Smulders has once again attained level 4 on the Safety Culture Ladder, marking a significant accomplishment and demonstrating a steadfast dedication to safety and well-being in the workplace. We extend our gratitude to everyone who played a role in achieving this outstanding result. It is a real piece of teamwork that both our staff and management can be justly proud of. We achieved this success thanks to the commitment and involvement of all departments, and by taking immediate action in an unsafe situation. Our QHSE management system and our HSE staff play a crucial role in creating a safe working environment and staying connected with our employees. Safety is the number one priority at Smulders, and we remain committed to maintaining and improving it. Together with our team, we provide an environment where everyone can work safely.



€10,000 raised for Mercy Ships by working out

From April to the end of May, our colleagues once again exercised for charity. Over the course of seven weeks, participants covered a virtual distance of 9,794 kilometres, corresponding to the locations of our ongoing projects, through various forms of exercise. This effort successfully raised €10,000 for Mercy Ships.

The challenge was simple: raise money for charity with your workout routine. This year we chose Mercy Ships, an organisation that provides medical care to people in need. This contribution will significantly impact Mercy Ships' efforts, enabling them to sustain their provision of essential medical care to those in greatest need. The amount raised will have a big impact on Mercy Ships' work.



Employer branding campaign: beautiful packaging with impact

Deep down, we've known it for some time: at Smulders, we achieve great things, with great people. We may not always – humble as we are – shout it from the rooftops, but that has now changed. Yes, we can and yes, we are worth it. Thanks to d-artagnan, the employer branding agency that gave us the push we needed.

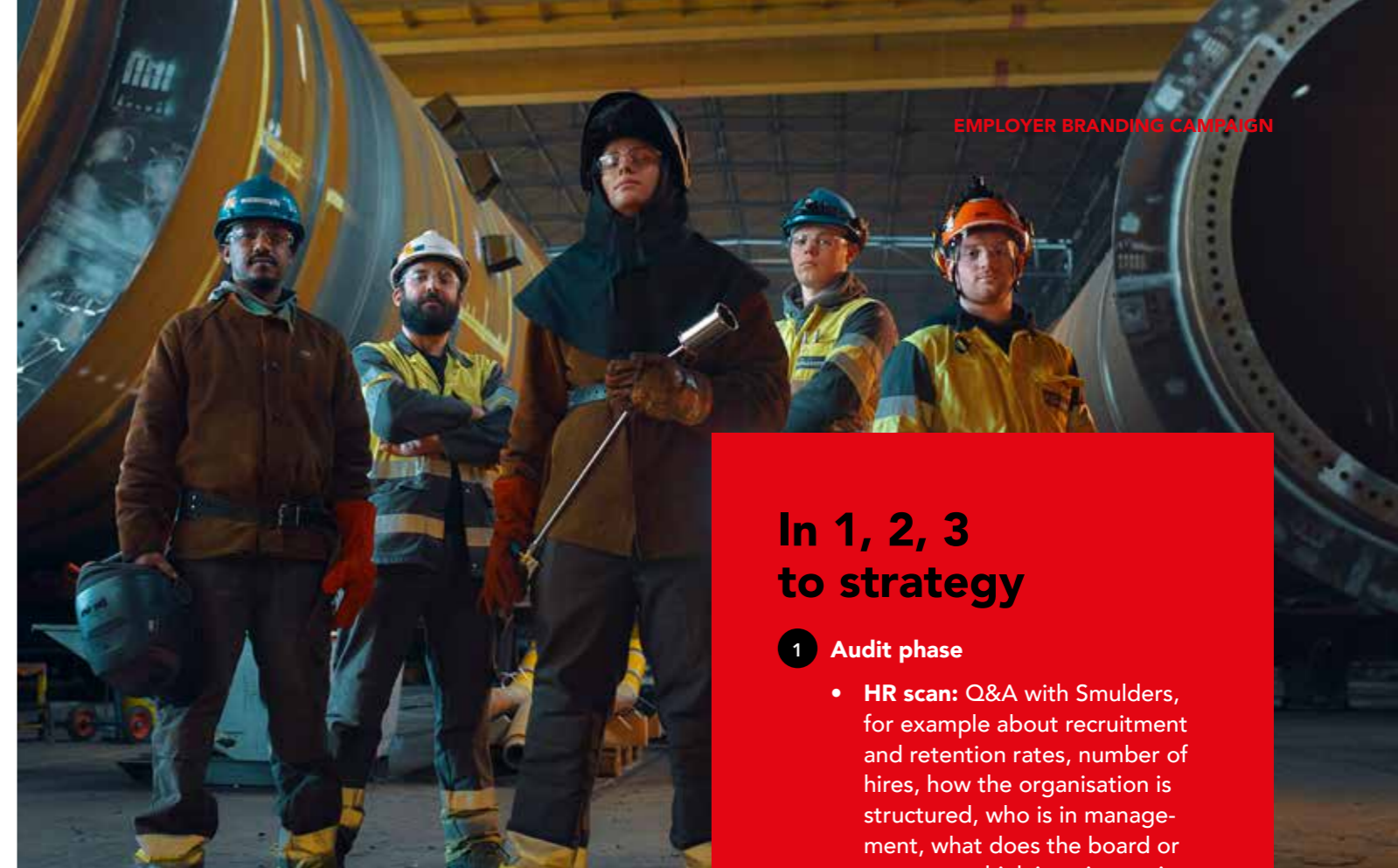


Honestly? It had to be done. As we expand, we are seeking to hire numerous new colleagues, even in less conventional areas of expertise. We find ourselves in a challenging job market. To bolster our recruitment efforts, it was essential to enhance our employer brand and boost our brand visibility. This initiative led to a collaborative effort between HR and Marketing, with our employees playing a major role.

Bart Lombaerts, HR Director at Smulders: "True, because employer branding starts from within, with input from our people. They make Smulders,

they know what resonates and they are our best ambassadors. Encouraging connection and retention is also part of the campaign, to create an authentic and valuable story towards potential new employees and other stakeholders. The same story, all of us together, because we are 1 group."

Britt Weckx, Marketing Coordinator at Smulders: "Besides, we have also been working on our repositioning over the past year, from steel company to systems integrator - manufacturing a sustainable world. That is



In 1, 2, 3 to strategy

1 Audit phase

- **HR scan:** Q&A with Smulders, for example about recruitment and retention rates, number of hires, how the organisation is structured, who is in management, what does the board or core team think is going on in the workplace, and so on.
- **Workshops:** 6 workshops, with a mix of manual and office workers, juniors and seniors, men and women, spread across the Belgian sites where participants were allowed to give their views on Smulders.
- **Communication scan:** screening of all employer branding materials and channels already available.

2 Interim review

Discussion results and findings, working points and positive issues. From manual worker to purchaser and engineer: 'proud' turned out to be the magic word.

3 Launch strategy

Draw up annual plan, set short-term and long-term goals, choose channels and messages. Also some quick wins for quick adjustments in anticipation of new communications and expressions.

what we stand for today, that is what we want to promote even more, both internally and externally. Let it be clear, our strategic choices, HR initiatives and marketing actions cannot be separated. An employer branding campaign had to be all-encompassing, and we really needed a specialist for that. After some exploratory talks and pitches, we chose to partner with d-artagnan, an agency with a proven track record."

Master your magic

But how exactly does an employer branding campaign go in practice? The pitch which was chosen in mid-2023 already set the tone with a solid plan of action, inspiring references and a clear click between the parties. A first teaser for the image of Smulders as an employer hit the core team of HR, Marketing and Management in the soul.

Jenna Hanne, Account Manager d-artagnan:

"Smulders is a family of action-takers. You transform the most complex challenges into a sustainable future. Many hands make masterwork, and that sometimes seems like magic. And we are not talking about silly card tricks or top hats where rabbits jump out of. Everyone has magical skills inside, and can develop them to the full. And that in many different types of jobs,

“You transform the most complex challenges into a sustainable future. Together, you are strong as steel, which may seem like magic.”



on sites or in offices, in Belgium or abroad - #masteryourmagic. Once the pitch was defined, the strategic planning process could start.”

Many hands make masterwork

With the strategic groundwork laid, the creatives at d-artagnan got to work. They infused the campaign with the company’s values, revamped for a fresh appearance, and incorporated a strong emphasis on #familyspirit, in line with parent company Eiffage’s vision. All this led to a powerful statement: ‘Many hands make masterwork’. This phrase captures the essence of Smulders’ employer value proposition as part of its ‘Master your magic’ campaign.

The campaign’s look and feel were further enhanced by new images and videos and an update to our recruitment website. From this point, the creative process continued, yielding three foundational elements and numerous impactful messages.

Bart Lombaerts: “The development of those creations is ongoing and occurs in phases, making it a work in progress. d-artagnan began our creative journey with a manifesto video and various campaign images, all designed to

animate the employer branding concept with the specific messages we defined. Internally, we launched the campaign in March, externally it went viral from 1 April.”

Britt Weckx: “We speak of a so-called HERO phase for more ‘awareness’, with all kinds of derivatives for various media. Because first and foremost, we want to put Smulders on the map as a WOW employer. Through every channel you can think of: social media, bus shelters, targeted ads on TV, as well as the big screen in Kinopolis and UCG cinemas in and around Antwerp and the Kempen region. This campaign ran in the spring, and will be repeated in autumn 2024.”

Jenna Hanne: “After that, depending on the needs, HUB campaigns will follow to better reach certain profiles and locations. A campaign targeting engineers in (the vicinity of) Arendonk, for example. We will do so with the same story and concept, but specifically fine-tuned and with or without more focus on certain media. Besides HERO and HUB, we also make sure Smulders is ALWAYS ON. “We have enhanced the job site both aesthetically and functionally, supply advertisements, and also deliver several additional social media posts each month.”

Magical collaboration

Today, Smulders has 1,830 employees. We hope and believe that this number will significantly increase in the near future. This is because an employer branding campaign is about more than just attractive packaging. Campaigns are continuously monitored and refined. This involves staying attuned to current trends, engaging employees internally, and enhancing visibility externally. The goal is to attract new colleagues and position Smulders as a premier employer for job seekers.

Britt Weckx: “We also offer prospects for our foreign branches. We are an international company with a consistent message, so our employer branding campaign will ultimately extend beyond national borders. Local teams are involved and can adapt the campaign to reflect their unique cultural nuances. This has been a particularly special and enlightening experience for me. It’s been intensely busy, but seeing the initial results now, I am very pleased. Additionally, we are integrating the employer branding campaign into all our communications, not just on social media but also at job fairs with our completely redesigned job stand.”

Bart Lombaerts: “I share the same sentiment. When something works well, it’s the result of a great team effort. Drawing on insights from our employees, we collaborated with d-artagnan to develop an authentic employer brand that attracts the right talent and bolsters our team of skilled masters of magic. The attributes that stand out are strength, determination, craftsmanship, and a sense of family. It’s a warm brand, accented with hints of red and a sprinkle of magic.”

Jenna Hanne: “We are proud of the magical collaboration with Smulders. We did not leave anything to chance and we felt a lot of confidence. Very happy that we were able to go through the entire process, and also be by your side tomorrow.”

Watch the full campaign video again? On the new job site: masteryourmagic.be.

#familyspirit
#masteryourmagic
#samensterkinmeesterwerk

“Based on input from our own employees, we worked with d-artagnan to create an authentic employer brand to attract the right talent and strengthen our team of proud masters of magic.”

Christel Tijskens' ambition



At the intersection of technology and innovation, the team of 'Administrative Assistants Technology & QHSE' are moving mountains of supporting activities. Christel Tijskens is one of them, and we got to talk to her about her job and experiences on and off the shop floor.

Your job title sounds exciting and innovative – what exactly does it entail?

"Together with my colleagues, I manage a range of administrative duties for our department across different branches. Our tasks, always related to technology and innovation within the QHSE domain, include creating PowerPoint presentations, organising training sessions, producing safety videos, developing instructional materials and posters, setting up training venues, and distributing invitations. Additionally, we monitor communications in the mailbox, track tender submissions, and compile monthly data for management reports. We report to Carla Wellens and Sophie Kreydt."

How do you make a difference, together with your colleagues?

Everything has to be correct, so we are committed to responding quickly to anything that comes up. We see our clients as customers and we want to keep everyone happy. This involves promptly addressing tasks and prioritising them effectively. As dedicated team players, we readily support one another. We excel in follow-up, sending reminders, and persisting until the job is done. We understand everyone is busy, but a friendly call can make all the difference. That's how we are achieving results."

What do you like most about your job and Smulders?

"The variety, freedom, flexibility and appreciation. If a task sometimes seems more difficult, my motto is: try first, then ask for help. Creating dashboards and presentations allows me the freedom to decide my approach to tasks. Whenever I am stuck, collaborating with team members and clients

drives me forward. It is 'give and take' and that's how I strive for success and efficiency. I really enjoy working here, in May exactly five years."

Congratulations in advance, and what will the future bring?

"Preferably working at Smulders until I retire. That was already my ambition when I started. Meanwhile, I have passed on the Smulders vibe to my husband who has started working at Willems in Balen this year. Well, what's in the heart, comes out the mouth, also in your private life. Both my job and my family are my passion. This all fits together smoothly, we've got a good system in place, allowing ample time for walking, holidays, and rowing on my indoor machine. For the rowing, I get up at 4:40 every morning. It builds my resilience and fosters a positive mindset, which I then bring back to my work at Smulders. You see, everything has come full circle."

"What's in the heart, comes out the mouth, also in your private life. Both my job and my family are my passion."

Reflections by Prashanth Mysore

A vessel of engineering knowledge, dedication and energy. Enter Prashanth Mysore, Technical Manager at Angus Consulting Engineers, our engineering office in India's technology hub Bangalore. The design and detailing of steel structures in close cooperation with Belgian colleagues brings something new every day, resulting in a fine example of mixed teamwork seasoned with #familyspirit.

As Technical Manager, Prashanth leads an engineering team of 3D BIM modellers and draftsmen. He takes care of the technical guidance and implementation of efficient workflows. He also keeps a close eye on the cooperation with Belgium, aimed at synchronising efforts and achieving sustainable project goals. Some 5 weeks in Europe in 2024, that too is part of the job. Prashanth talks about his remarkable journey and warm rapport with Smulders.

The challenges

"My adventure with Angus began 3 years after I graduated as a mechanical engineer, and I have always felt at home with the Belgians. Though we are relatively new compared to Smulders' extensive history, we have faced each challenge with unwavering determination. Our efforts are aimed at addressing the expanding engineering requirements and the anticipated demand for larger platforms and jackets."

Innovation through collaboration

"Making our mark would not have been a success without Freddy Willems, our mentor and guru, who provided us with 15 years of guidance in India. I also want to emphasize the numerous constructive and warm interactions we've had with the management in Belgium, which have greatly supported us. We operate as one team, one family, uniquely combining local and global expertise. Driven by innovation and collaboration, we strive to expand the frontiers of engineering excellence. We are all master craftsmen, with an above-average focus on sustainability."

"Be passionate about your work and keep exploring out of the box."

Work, play, win

"Indeed, life is more than just work. Even outside the office walls in Bangalore, we are one big family. Whether it's trekking through nature, playing cricket, or finding zen through yoga, we believe that a team that plays together, wins together. We have also learned a lot from the Belgians in the meantime. I don't speak Dutch, but I don't want to keep my favourite expression from you: 'godverdomme' – it has a certain charm to it when a Belgian pronounces it (laughs)."

Prashanth dedicates this contribution to the entire Angus team, expressing gratitude for their commitment and passion.





He Dreih



Renfrew bridge



Hollandse Kust (west Beta)



Noirmoutier



Ijburg bridges



Inch Cape

Getting to the core with **Root Cause Analysis**



You can continue to enhance quality and safety, but without addressing the underlying cause of an issue, the efforts are merely a drop in the ocean. That's why at Smulders, we rely on Root Cause Analysis (RCA) to truly understand the core issues. This method prompts us to improve continuously.

The process is straightforward: when a quality or safety issue arises, you start by asking why it occurred. You repeat this question for each subsequent answer, drilling down five times until you reach the root cause. This is known as the '5 Whys methodology'. At Smulders, we document these findings in a fault tree analysis. The final step involves developing corrective actions or improvements to ensure such issues do not happen again with a high degree of certainty.

Andrés Benítez, QHSE Engineer: "Quality and safety are often associated with a 'necessary evil'. At Smulders, we know better. Quality, safety and sustainable initiatives add enormous value for our people, processes, products and customers. It's embedded in our DNA. When RCA is conducted properly and involves the relevant teams - going beyond just a QHSE exercise - it saves both time and money by identifying defects for future consideration. For instance, we recently addressed a welding issue caused by insufficient weld thickness. Through thorough questioning and analysis, we identified seven actionable steps to prevent recurrence. Consider the costs we avoid with these pre-emptive measures: documenting and analysing the problem, extra materials, additional inspections, and, if issues go undetected until after delivery, the expenses of claims, transport, recalls, and lost profits. Repair costs are generally higher than production costs, sometimes several times higher."

Leading by example

Smulders Projects Poland also has positive experiences with RCA. Magdalena Wrona, Assistant Project Manager and Maciej Hajduc, Manager of the Project Management Department, talk about their progress in that area:

"For the 'South Fork and Revolution project', we had to re-produce some items, resulting in additional costs. Supported by our QHSE colleagues in Belgium, we did an RCA exercise with the production department in Poland to avoid such costs in the future. Incorrect pieces were also sent out. A key action point that came out of this was the optimisation of stock locations so that the right items could be selected for transport in the future. We implemented the action points immediately in our various Polish sites and at very short notice. Perfect teamwork it was, under the approving eye of Belgium. We learn a lot from our colleagues abroad, and it is valuable that we can share our knowledge. Both in terms of quality and safety."

The key lesson according to Andrés: Avoid blaming individuals and instead, identify faults in processes or training. Design issues, along with inadequate documentation and training, often lie at the core of problems. While RCA may still seem abstract to some, its effectiveness is clear, and there is a pressing need for standardised methods or guidelines for optimization.

Many hands make masterwork

**PLAY
IT
SAFE**

