FunctieWijzer has built a cloud-based HR services platform together with Thinkwise

FunctieWijzer is a startup company that has developed a cloud-based HR solution with the Thinkwise low-code platform. With this HR application, companies can organize job classifications and employee assessments, and design their salary structure via a user-friendly web environment. Furthermore, this is all done quickly and transparently, and at much lower costs than with existing solutions.

Many organizations struggle with the design of their salary structure, job classifications and determining the remuneration structure. There is a demand fuelled by employees, trade unions and participation bodies, that all want to see more transparency and objectivity. Despite this need, this important HR-challenge is often postponed indefinitely, particularly in the case of SMEs. The reason is that the existing services in this field are very expensive and time-consuming. FunctieWijzer provides a solution with an affordable and user-friendly online platform that is accessible to companies of all sizes and that has been developed using the Thinkwise low-code platform.

Innovative methodology

FunctieWijzer was founded by Guido Hupjé and Patrick Groenendal, both experienced HR professionals. They came into contact with each other again via LinkedIn in 2017. They knew each other when they were young but had since lost contact. It turned out that they had both chosen the same profession and moreover, that independently they had devised an innovative HR methodology. Patrick had developed smart tools and algorithms for the classification of jobs in Excel and Guido had devised a methodology for employee assessment.

"We were both convinced that combining our methods and offering them as a service would fill a gap in the market," says Guido. "An innovative and transparent HR solution as a counterbalance to the monopolistic black box services provided by large global companies such as Hays, Mercer and Berenschot."

According to Guido, these renowned companies have their own methodologies for classifying jobs, but they provide their customers very little insight into the process and charge high rates for their services.

Guido: "We were sure things could be done differently. The applications we had developed were unique because of their transparency, but not very scalable because they were programmed in Excel. Our next step was therefore to transform to a cloud-based service."

From Excel to prototype

A business relation of Guido and Patrick suggested that they should contact Thinkwise. During their first meeting with Thinkwise founder and director Robert van der Linden, cooperation between the two parties initially showed little promise.

"We demonstrated what we had developed and he was quite impressed," says Guido. "The simplicity and strength of our engine particularly appealed to him. However, FunctieWijzer was not a typical customer for Thinkwise. But he also said that as an entrepreneur he has an affinity with people who want to try something new and innovative, such as a web-based HR product. So, at the same time, he told us that he would like to help us to produce a working product, with which we could start our company."

Within 45 minutes the founders of FunctieWijzer again found themselves outside the Thinkwise offices and they realized that their dream would very soon become reality. Guido: "We were proud that a large company such as Thinkwise wanted to help us transform our Excel-based application into a working SaaS product. To our great surprise Thinkwise developed a working prototype, with which FunctieWijzer could go to market, within one month. Thinkwise has a tool with which you can easily import Excel code, and this immediately creates a rough low-code model in background. This model can then be used to continue building the solution. This happens extremely quickly."

Everywhere that the FunctieWijzer team subsequently went to demonstrate the product, people were amazed about the ease of use of FunctieWijzer and the very professional output it produced. This was the proof that Guido and Patrick were looking for that their product had a future.

Control and transparency
During the months that followed, the product was further developed and prepared for its introduction in the market. The FunctieWijzer web-based application now allows organizations to take concrete steps to define and classify the jobs within their organization and design the complete salary structure, in an extremely transparent manner.

Guido: "In our system each function is weighted by at least three people within an organization on the basis of forty criteria. This is then input for discussion, and this is exactly what we want, that discussions take place. This highlights which jobs a company needs and identifies the associated responsibilities."

FunctieWijzer also enables companies to design and set their salary structure with a desired number of salary scales and rules or with a scale minimum and a scale maximum.

"Everything can be adjusted very flexibly," Guido explains. "In our system you maintain control by means of the parameters you define, so that you can not exceed the maximum margin for salary increases."

HR startup of the year
In 2019, the efforts of FunctieWijzer were rewarded during the Recruitment+Talent Tech Demo Day 2019. The company won first prize as the best new HR startup. It is also in discussion with several participants in the HR market with regard to collaboration. The customer base has been growing steadily ever since, even though for many companies, according to Guido, FunctieWijzer still sounds too good to be true: "Many companies have had the wish to professionalize their salary system for a long time, but were never willing to spend over a hundred thousand dollars on an expensive consultancy company.

We charge a tenth of the price, and they often find that unbelievable. Because of this we usually meet with senior management instead of with HR."

According to Guido, the users of FunctieWijzer are very enthusiastic about the system: "It is unique in the HR market, because it involves people in the process in a very transparent manner. It results in discussions about the value of specific jobs and ensures transparency and awareness about how your organization actually functions. This stimulates a great deal of enthusiasm and that is really nice to see."

Strategic choice
"If I would have to reselect a development platform, then I would opt for Thinkwise once again." says Guido. "The speed of development is phenomenal. And we are now also experiencing the real flexibility provided by low-code. If we want to modify something in FunctieWijzer then that is accomplished incredibly rapidly."

Thinkwise was responsible for the initial development of FunctieWijzer and provided proactive advice during the process. "They regularly made useful suggestions about the application of our methods and algorithms in the platform." However, Guido fully expects that in due course they will carry out development using the platform for themselves. "I do not expect low-code development to present any difficulties as I already have affinity with programming and databases."

Lastly, he really sees Thinkwise as a partner, that through its high involvement has contributed to the success of FunctieWijzer: "Thinkwise also started small and has always moved with the times. The company has grown strongly in recent years and is now on the eve of even greater growth. That is what makes their customer orientation so special, even for a startup as FunctieWijzer."