

Alfred Apps

Specialism: Senior and Youth Professional Football Recruitment, with notable success around Europe

Availability: Immediate

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Personal Specification

Experienced football recruitment professional with 25+ years in senior and youth recruitment, with a successful track record in the **Premier League (18+ years)** at **Aston Villa**, **West Ham**, and **Chelsea**. Proven versatility and key attribute development, emphasising a keen eye for detail and a passion for discovering new talent. Notable for cultivating strong relationships with emerging players and prioritising a holistic approach to player assessment, focusing on physical development, technical ability, attitude, and long-term potential. Well-connected in European football circles, particularly in Spain, Germany, Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland. Recognised for identifying overlooked young talents who have achieved successful careers, including **Andre Schurrle**, **Gareth Barry**, **Andreas Christensen** and more. Adept at navigating post-Brexit football regulations and contributing expertise to top-level clubs' recruitment strategies.

Employment History

Head of Global Recruitment

WMG Spain

May 2018 – April 2022

I was headhunted once more, this time to establish operations in Spain from scratch. We successfully built everything from the ground up, including a comprehensive database that allowed us to identify the best players across the entire country. Our recruitment efforts extended to first-team players, adding an extra layer of complexity to the role.

Head of Spanish Youth Recruitment

Stellar Agency

January 2015 – April 2018

I was brought in by Stellar Agency to form a youth player recruitment team in Spain. This involved implementing a database structure and hiring scouts to identify top talent across the country. Our efforts proved highly successful, resulting in the recruitment of some of Spain's finest players, such as Iliax Kourouma, Tomas Mendes, Mateo Meijer, and Mateo Joseph.

International Football Scout (Germany, Holland & Switzerland)

Chelsea

August 2011 – December 2014

My role comprised of both first team and academy scouting responsibilities; with a specific remit to develop the Chelsea scouting network in Europe through forging new relationships within specific countries.

A primary duty when joining Chelsea was to develop a holistic philosophy of youth recruitment while ensuring it aligns with the requirements of the senior team and their aims. This, in part, led to the development of an advanced 'in-house' database to statistically analyse and scrutinise youth players throughout Europe.

The players in whose recruitment I played a significant role were:

- Andre Schurrle
- Andreas Christensen
- Charlie Musonda

Head of European Recruitment

Aston Villa Football Club

August 2006 – August 2011

As the head of European Recruitment, I was tasked with leading a team of scouts to identify and evaluate emerging youth prospects in Europe which fitted within Aston Villa's philosophy and financial budget.

Upon re-joining Aston Villa, we opted to optimise our recruitment network. This involved implementing a new software program that systematically recorded key parameters deemed essential for success at Aston Villa by the senior recruitment staff.

Upon identification of a player of interest by the European department, the recruitment department, including the Academy Director, scrutinized the player database. The opinions of each scout were consulted, incorporating statistics and 'field-based evidence' for a comprehensive approach to recruitment at Aston Villa.

Head of European Scouting

West Ham

July 2005 – August 2006

West Ham headhunted me to revamp their first-team and academy scouting network across England and Europe. This was a new role for West Ham. My primary objective was to identify fresh talent, aiming to solidify West Ham's position in the Premier League. Given that this marked a new venture for West Ham into recruitment investment, a significant focus was placed on fostering relationships among scouts, agents, and clubs.

Southern Scout

Aston Villa Football Club

January 1995 – June 2004

In my initial position at Aston Villa, I served as the youth scout based in the South before earning a promotion to the Head of European Scouting. This advancement was a result of my notable success in discovering youth talent. Given the early stage of scouting in England, I embraced a holistic approach to player recruitment, particularly favoring face-to-face interactions with players, parents, or agents.

T Hitzlerberger	Free	18y	German Full international
Gareth Barry	Free	15y	England Full international
Liam Ridgwell	Free	17y	Progressed to England U21
Jalloyd Samuel	Free	16y	Progressed to England U21

References available on request