

Kimball Electronics Case Study

Driving significant cost savings and extra efficiency



Kimball
International

Company Profile

Established in 1961 to produce electronics for parent company Kimball International, Kimball Electronics is today an industry leader with an international presence in electronics manufacturing for the automotive, medical, and public safety industries.

Global HR Specialist Denise Astrike is part of Kimball Electronics' US recruiting team. A 20-year Kimball veteran, she works closely with each of the human resources departments in all nine Kimball Electronics locations around the world.

And with 1,037 employees in Kimball's US locations - plus almost 2,000 in their Mexico, Europe, and Asia regions - Denise and her team have a lot of employees to keep track of on a daily basis.

The Challenge

Denise's team is responsible for hiring two types of employees: business-side professionals and shop and floor workers, mainly in the US and Western Europe.

Their previous technique for recruiting those professionals - using job boards to find and reach out to them - was a long, painstaking, and thoroughly inefficient process.

"You may get 300 [resumes], and there may be 10 out of them that are really worth looking at. But you have to look at all 300 of them," says Denise.

Director of Talent Acquisition Terry Tucker wanted a better solution. Acting on a recommendation from colleagues, he and the Kimball team took a close look at LinkedIn Recruiter. They compared Recruiter carefully to other products for several months.

Then, in late November 2008, they purchased four seats for their US office: One for Denise, one for Terry, and two for Terry and Denise's fellow recruiters.

LinkedIn Recruiter: The Solution

In December 2008, Kimball Electronics made the leap to LinkedIn Recruiter—and found instant success.

"It's so intuitive," Denise says enthusiastically. "If you use LinkedIn for other things, it's almost seamless."

Kimball Electronics Division of Kimball International

Headquarters: Jasper, Indiana
Recruiting team: 5
LinkedIn Recruiter seats: 4
Total employees: 3,061

Executive Summary

Only two months into using LinkedIn Recruiter, Kimball Electronics achieved dramatic savings on its very first hire - and immediately decided to stop using third-party recruiters and job boards, saving them 20 to 35 percent on all future hires. Kimball now relies exclusively on LinkedIn Recruiter for highly improved cost savings, collaboration, and team productivity. Their greatest success has been in finding professional-level employees in the US and Western Europe.

"There's a better, much more cost-effective way, and quite frankly, LinkedIn affords us that."

Denise Astrike, Global HR Specialist, Kimball Electronics

Significant Cost Savings

In January 2009, barely two months after starting Recruiter, Kimball found its "needle in the haystack": the perfect combination of price and efficiency.

On their very first search, Denise's team identified, found, and hired a highly qualified US business manager in much less time than it usually takes to identify most of their candidates.

What's more, because that one hire has more than covered the Recruiter purchase fee, any new hire that Kimball makes this year will be 100% profit.

All without a single post to the traditional job boards.

"No External Recruiter Fees"

Best of all, Denise is now fulfilling Kimball's internal mandate of "No External Recruiter Fees." Because LinkedIn Recruiter only costs a flat fee per year, Kimball has completely dropped their use of third-party recruiters - and will save 20 to 35 percent in recruiter fees on every future hire.

"There's a better, much more cost-effective way, and quite frankly, LinkedIn affords us that," says Denise. "Our new hire just started today, and we have now just paid for our seats for a year. So we're good."

Denise couldn't be more pleased with Kimball's immediate return on investment. And she's already planning for the future.

"It wouldn't surprise me, when the economy picks up, if we double the amount of seats," she says. "One hire is all we really need in order to cost-justify it for the whole company."

She mentions a search that Terry Tucker is currently working on. "Terry is completely relying on LinkedIn, and not even looking at other sources."

Powerful Search And Collaboration

Kimball specifically chose LinkedIn Recruiter over LinkedIn's less expensive (and less complete) Pro account, for Recruiter's advanced search and organization tools. "We liked the ability to have the door wide open," Denise says.

Once Denise has saved her search for a candidate, any of her colleagues can pick up that search where she left off. That colleague can then continue the search in Denise's absence, or take over for her altogether.

"Terry and I can both work on the same project," Denise says. "I can see what he does. Otherwise everything is just on my account, and no one can see what's happening."

Denise also says that this same search capability has proven to be very helpful with some of HR's more sensitive situations.

"You can't really proactively post a position on Monster or HotJobs when you have some performance issues," she explains. But with LinkedIn Recruiter, "you can do some searches for candidates ahead of time to not be so reactive. The collaboration opportunities that we have... [Recruiter] helps promote teamwork and collaboration across our company."

Increased Efficiency

Recruiting isn't all that Denise does. She's also responsible for a wide range of internal duties: acquisitions, HR integration, payroll, best practices, and working on standardization issues with Kimball International's global operations team.

So she particularly appreciates Recruiter's extra layers of efficiency. She's even created a workflow around a few favorite functions: Advanced Search, converting LinkedIn profiles into easy-to-email PDFs, and saving searches for personal or team use.

And when it's time for Denise to pick up the candidate search again, Recruiter is the tool that makes that process much easier.

"There are times when you think, 'Oh my God, am I ever going to find one?' The time it takes is just phenomenal," Denise says of the job-board hunt. "But you're able to be more proactive and target the people you want to talk to, with LinkedIn."

"Top-Notch" Customer Service

LinkedIn Recruiter is known for its excellent customer service, and Denise has nothing but praise for the level of service that she's received.

"They are top-notch professionals," she says. "They do an outstanding job making sure you know what you're getting, and helping you understand the best practices to use in that process."

"A Natural Evolution"

Only two months into their subscription, Denise is completely satisfied with Kimball's choice of LinkedIn Recruiter.

"I had three really excellent candidates that I found through searches," she says. "When the economy turns around, we'll be much further along."

"It was really a natural evolution for us. I think there's real value there for companies who want to give it a try."

talent.linkedin.com | sales@linkedin.com

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