

Case Study

Skyline Recruiting



Highlights

- Increased the number of hires by 50 percent from 2010 to 2011 and trimmed time-to-hire by more than 30 percent using LinkedIn.
- Gained greater access to international talent thanks to referrals generated through LinkedIn.
- Connected with and landed passive candidates via LinkedIn before they even began job hunting.

Company Profile

Skyline Recruiting brings more than 25 years of experience to Silicon Valley and beyond, using a hands-on approach to fill high-level permanent and contract positions. Hiring managers trust Skyline to provide well-screened and seasoned professionals who are interview ready. The boutique agency sources talent in software, hardware and firmware engineering; product marketing; technical writing; and sales.

Seeking an Alternative to Job Boards

To perform retained and contingency searches for its clients, filling up to 20 open requisitions each month, Skyline co-founders Elise Clark and Gretchen Sand had relied on Dice for nearly 15 years, but in 2008, the recruiting landscape began to change.

“We want to do the best job we can for every client,” Elise said. “When the recession hit, many of the internal recruiters at our clients were also using Dice, so the feeling became, ‘Why should we pay you for candidates we could hypothetically find on our own?’ And, if we (Skyline) couldn’t post jobs on Dice, then we were wasting our valuable search resources.”

Something had to change, and the answer was right at their fingertips. “My partner and I had been using our personal LinkedIn accounts for a while,” Elise recalled. “The solution was working well, but it made even more sense to activate a pair of LinkedIn Recruiter Professional Services (RPS) licenses – primarily for access to more InMails, since we use that feature so much.”

From the start, Skyline was impressed with the robust functionality of the RPS solution, and its seamless integration with Job Slots. They appreciated the flexibility to switch jobs frequently, depending on client priorities. Together, these two solutions created an efficient process for each new requisition and enabled Skyline to manage candidates within specific project folders. This collaboration and automated routing of applicants saved them countless hours each week.

“You’re crazy if you’re not using LinkedIn. It has truly become a point of difference between Skyline and the other recruiting agencies out there.”

Elise Clark, Co-founder of Skyline Recruiting

“Passive candidates are very important. That’s what our clients want. Those are the people they can’t get, and LinkedIn is the only way I know of to reach them. If the right person is out there, we will find them.”

Elise Clark, Co-founder of Skyline Recruiting

Digging the Power of the Professional Network

Elise is no stranger to rolling up her sleeves to find the right candidates. “I was an archeology major at the University of California-Davis,” she said. “So I have no problem digging, but you’ve got to have the right tool. That’s why we use LinkedIn Recruiter Professional Services. If the right person is out there, we will find them.”

Skyline uses LinkedIn Recruiter Professional Services exclusively and extensively, constantly sending InMails to make connections and follow up on referrals. Conducting precise, targeted searches are a key component of Skyline’s approach, enabling them to hone in on candidates from competing companies, with specific skill sets, and in the right city or country.

“You’re crazy if you’re not using LinkedIn. It has truly become a point of difference between Skyline and the other recruiting agencies out there,” she said.

Hiring in China with Pinpoint Accuracy

While Skyline had a strong network in Silicon Valley, over the years the emphasis had shifted to more international recruiting. “Our connections were solid in the San Francisco Bay Area, but not as strong in Europe, China and India,” Elise said.

Then Skyline began working with a large audio company that had R&D facilities in China. “They wanted the best talent from all over the world,” Elise recalled. “We not only had to find the right people, but each candidate had to be willing to relocate to China.”

As usual, the process started with LinkedIn. She conducted a search based on a local competitor and sent out a series of InMails. These efforts helped Skyline find a prospective candidate, and Elise started a dialogue.

“I told him the name of the very tiny town where the facility was located. Amazingly, he had a friend who lived in that exact town,” Elise beamed. “Introductions were made, the candidate toured the facility and an offer soon followed. Out of the millions of people in China, we found exactly the right candidate living in exactly the right town.”

Since then, LinkedIn alone has helped her make seven more placements for the client.

Plugging in with Passive Candidates

“Passive candidates are very important. That’s what our clients want,” Elise said. “Those are the people they can’t get, and LinkedIn is the only way I know of to reach them. Nearly all the people I connect with are passive candidates, and about one-third of them are quietly looking, so it’s good to catch them early, before they start seriously looking around.”

LinkedIn Recruiter Professional Services connects Skyline with better candidates while compressing the time it takes to find them. “The ROI is amazing. One decent placement pays for a whole year of licensing,” Elise confessed. “Recruiting is a time-consuming process. It used to take about 90 days to identify the right talent. Now that we use LinkedIn, it takes about 60 days.”

And the more Skyline uses LinkedIn, the more talent it’s placing. “We’ve made about 50 percent more hires in 2011 than we did in 2010,” she concluded.

LinkedIn User Tips

- Use InMail to connect with any candidates that generally fit your parameters. Even if they aren’t perfect matches, they could be referrals.
- Once you find a candidate, scan through all of his connections. It’s an easy way to find others who could fit your search criteria.