

Operating Globally, a Work-in-Progress

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Companies expanding their global footprint, whether in mature or emerging markets, understand that acquiring the best talent available is essential for success. CDI, a leading provider of high-value engineering and information technology outsourcing and professional staffing, has been doing that for over 50 years.

CDI brings together the best and brightest recruiting talent and methodologies through its CDI-Talent Management group, a provider of on-demand staffing, managed programs, recruitment process outsourcing and workforce consulting. Additionally, it extends its global reach through divisions such as AndersElite – a market leader in the placement of permanent and contract professionals in the UK and Australia construction and engineering markets, and the **MRINetwork**® – one of the world's largest executive search firms with over 850 offices in 35 countries.

Managing the Workplace Globally

“A major question for large companies with global technical needs is: ‘How do I move engineers around the globe?’” says John Lewis, CDI’s National Program Director for a global power and energy solutions company where CDI provides engineering and field engineering capability and support to the client’s global operations.

The answer is CDI’s *Globalization Team* comprised of knowledge experts in the fields of legal, risk management, finance, tax and human resources. “Our globalization team provides the business with a global perspective,” notes Laurie Menner, Director of Operation Programs for CDI. “Their knowledge and global experience help us deliver quickly on a client’s needs. They also help us to protect our clients, by advising what can and cannot be done within a local cultural environment.” With specialized perspective and recommendations from the *Globalization Team*, a client’s staff can easily be transferred to and from multiple locations as the need arises.

Through investment in best-in-class international operational support capability, CDI has enabled its program leaders to quickly adjust to the changing requirements of both client and market conditions. Although international assignments can vary, this individualized approach allows the variables to dictate the solutions provided.

Sourcing Top Talent Locally

The major challenges for most companies expanding into existing global markets – or entering new or emerging markets – are the cultural, legislative and linguistic nuances of the working relationships. Having a local presence in these countries provides in-depth knowledge about the operations, language and cultural considerations needed to provide effective talent sourcing and acquisition services.

Nowhere is this more evident than with the CDI/AndersElite relationship with a leading Canadian technology firm specializing in enterprise content management. CDI/Anders, in partnership

with the **MRINetwork**®, has leveraged its global presence to assist the client’s expansion within the European and emerging markets of Eastern Europe, The Middle East and Asia (specifically, Australia, Japan and Singapore).

A key client objective is to ensure uniformity in its recruitment process as they expand globally. CDI’s familiarity with the logistics of local operations (how things get done), and the cultural and legislative requirements that must be met (what must be done), provides an advantage in meeting the client’s operational objectives, despite the procedural and process challenges.

Most recently, CDI was called upon to help drive the client’s expansion into Luxembourg. CDI had not previously recruited in the country and there were linguistic challenges with which to contend. With its European operations headquartered in Germany the client required that candidates speak German and English. This presented a challenge since the local population primarily speaks French. However, CDI was able to meet the challenge of designing the acquisition strategy and securing the necessary candidates within the two-month required timeframe, as well as effectively managing the need for tri-lingual candidates with English/French/German skills.

With respect to sourcing and recruitment, “We don’t have a one-size-fits-all approach and not just one strategy,” says Chris O’Grady, CDI’s Recruiting Manager for Europe, The Middle East, and Asia/Pacific regions. “We may or may not deploy similar strategies. The market drives the process, which is a dynamic process to begin with, and CDI has a history of staying on top of local market changes.”

Leveraging Strategic Partnerships

The current global economic environment has had an impact on the acquisition process in both the global and emerging markets. There are many more people looking for work and fewer top talent individuals willing to leave existing positions. Because of this dynamic, the acquisition process is becoming more complex than ever before. By offering a suite of services in high-end search the **MRINetwork**®, in partnership with CDI, is able to provide clients with a significant depth and breadth of services to assist them with navigating through these market changes.

MRINetwork® recruiters work at the local level and operate in a very personal way. CDI, on the other hand, is a nearly \$1 billion corporation ensuring financial strength and staying power which provides any customer, large or small, the best of both worlds and a more complete service package.

“For the right companies, now is the time to make a difference in acquiring top grade talent,” says Jack Downing, a managing partner at WorldBridge Partners, an **MRINetwork**® franchise. “If you’re not working with the right recruiter, you are not getting in front of the right people – people who will make the move for the right company.” ■