

CASE STUDY:



Initial CRO Found for International Legal Service Firm

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OVERVIEW

For most companies, growth is both desirable and difficult to manage. Too much growth can overwhelm an organization's capacity; too little starves it of resources. Choosing the right pace and path can make or break the company.

Legal services provider CogencyGlobal had come to a fork in the road when it reached out to Peak Sales in late 2020. With offices in North America, Hong Kong and London, the New York-based firm works in jurisdictions around the world, offering compliance, statutory and registered agent services. Many of its clients are law firms, who resell the services to individual clients. These law firms are able to offer a large menu of services to their own clients while having a trusted partner, Cogency, handling critical and exacting details in the background such as formation, required corporate filings, IP, research, independent directors and managers.

THE ASK

Until they reached out to Peak Sales Executive Search, Cogency's sales and marketing efforts were headed by the CEO, and this was the first time it had ventured outside its own C-suite in search of a Chief Revenue Officer.

Successfully selling to high-end law firms is a highly specific task, and the company's expansion depended on finding someone who could build on what the CEO had been doing in sales and build out a robust team.

THE RESULT

In the end, **CogencyGlobal made a single offer, which was accepted.** From initial contact with Peak Sales Executive Search to the candidate's acceptance of the offer was **under 120 days.**

The conversations with CogencyGlobal developed into an ongoing relationship with Peak Sales Executive Search helping to continue build out the sales and marketing team.



“Cogency needed someone who could step in and run at pace immediately, someone who had sat in that CRO seat for a while; not someone who could grow or stretch, but someone who understood how to position legal services and could run with it quick.”

Ryan Moore
Practice Lead for Peak Sales Executive Search

FIRST STEPS

The first step was for the team at Peak Sales to understand how Cogency planned to go to market and — most importantly — to understand the nature and culture of the organization.

“We spent time talking with them about the company. The CEO was very engaged with sales,” Moore notes. “It’s a familial kind of organization. The CEO knows everyone’s name, and the sales team was accustomed to having ready access to him. Now, they were going to interpose a CRO between sales and the CEO, so that was a big change, and they knew they had to get it right.”

Armed with that understanding, the Peak Sales team got to work.

CASTING THE NET

“We didn’t want to go after someone from one of Cogency’s competitors,” Moore explains. “Instead, we focused our efforts on someone who was selling similar kinds of services into big legal firms, from a company that would have a real CRO themselves.”

As a world capital of law and finance, New York is a fertile ground for hunting legal sales talent. The first round turned up about 55 candidates. How to screen such a large pool? Peak Sales had its filters ready.

SURFACING THE GEMS

“We use psychometrics to help understand candidates’ natural preferences” Moore says. “In this case, the cultural fit was very important. We needed someone with the leadership experience to build out the sales organization and improve efficiencies, who would also fit into their culture seamlessly.”

Having found dozens of potential candidates with the sales leadership skills and right resués, they dove into understanding each one’s management philosophy: how to blend into the culture of a new workplace, how they chose to lead their teams and how they coached and mentored their staff.

That process narrowed the field to six optimal candidates. Those six were all technically qualified; they had the skills, background and experience needed to tackle the new CRO job and were a good fit for Cogency’s culture.

FINAL SELECTION

“There was good diversity in that pool of six,” Moore continues. “They had different backgrounds, skill sets and tenures. Cogency also asked us to include candidates who had worked for smaller, nimble companies. All of the candidates were people we felt would do very well, each bringing different strengths to the table. That allowed Cogency to pick the candidates whose strengths most aligned with strategic growth plans.”

With a set of potential CROs in front of them, Cogency began its own evaluations. “The first two rounds checked off all the professional boxes,” Moore says, “followed by an in-person lunch to get a feel for the cultural fit. Their eventual choice was someone who strongly mirrored culture and had the ability to push the sales organization forward.”

SUCCESS BREEDS SUCCESS

In the end, Cogency made a single offer, which was accepted. From initial contact with Peak Sales to the candidate’s acceptance of the offer was under 90 days.

“The candidate started with Cogency in mid-December and is onboarding into the organization extremely well,” Moore notes.

As often happens when Peak Sales places a leader, the relationship continues, and discussions move to further build out the sales organization in support the new leader.

“In these cases, we have a leg up because we’ve already completed the background work of understanding the organization, how they are structured, where they are headed and what they need. We become a true strategic partner with the ability to help them shape the future of the sales organization beyond purely recruiting.”



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