

After failed visa attempt, Mandarin Communications Group sponsors successful petition with Envoy

At 2 million strong, Chinese nationals comprise the third-largest foreign-born group in the United States. Dedicated to serving the professional and personal needs of this influential community is Mandarin Communications Group (MCG), a Chinese-focused marketing and media company. While locally born Chinese Americans make up a large portion of MCG's workforce, the company also recruits individuals born on the country's mainland to stay attuned to the issues that matter most to its audience.

Senior lifestyle editor Yu-Jin Chou is now one of those recruits — but almost wasn't. In her current role, Chou drafts and edits news stories, long-form features, manages photoshoots and other crucial tasks for *Mandarin Quarterly*, a lifestyle magazine geared toward Chinese students and young professionals. But the complex immigration process almost cost Chou the opportunity to pursue her career aspirations in the United States.

Overcoming a Visa Denial

"We tried to process Yu-Jin's visa with a law firm," says Sara Simmons, director of finance and administration at MCG. "The U.S. government said her role wasn't technical enough."

The petition was denied, and both MCG and Chou were forced to put the work visa on hold for a year, until the H-1B cap opened again.

This is a common story for many first-time work visa petitioners — an attorney's failure to explain the proper visa application procedures leads to a visa denial. According to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' (USCIS) 2014 Ombudsman Report, 30 percent of H-1B petitions received a Request for Evidence (RFE) notice, the official letter informing petitioners they didn't include enough evidence in the initial visa petition packet. This forces work visa sponsors to dedicate additional time and money to produce more documentation that satisfies eligibility requirements. And if USCIS still says that ample proof wasn't provided, the visa is denied.

To avoid this, Envoy provides the government agency with as many relevant documents as possible up front — "frontloading" the petitions to help reduce the likelihood of RFE notices and visa denials. In fact, Envoy affiliated attorneys have a 95%+* approval rate due to these practices.



About the Company

Industry

Marketing and Media

Background

Its media brands cater to affluent Chinese households and Chinese investors seeking opportunities in North America.

Reach

MCG has offices in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Additionally the company maintains affiliate partners in Boston, Dallas, Houston, Philadelphia, Seattle, Toronto, Vancouver and Washington DC.

"Being able to post questions, rather than having to call and leave a message, or send an email and wait for a reply, makes managing the immigration process pretty quick."

-Sara Simmons

Following Chou's denial, MCG enlisted the help of Envoy — which combines a tech-based immigration management platform with an exclusively retained team of attorneys — to lead the application process and prove that her role was eligible for the H-1B visa.

"Envoy was the second application attempt that we processed and it was successful," Simmons says.

Lack of Transparency

Looking back on her first experience working with the law firm, Simmons realizes an unwieldy application process wasn't the only flaw in the immigration provider's system.

"The response with the other attorney seemed a bit more abstract, and the attorney was not as reachable," Simmons says. "It was far from being able to go online and see everything. It's nice to look at a process and see where it is. With the previous attorneys, where everything stood was more vague."

Envoy erases that uncertainty with its in-app Dashboard, which fully details the case's status. Petitioners can log in, view a full list of required documents and are given real-time updates for each open case.

"The documentation process was different. With Envoy, everything is online and it makes it easier to see what's needed or what's pending," Simmons says. "If there's any questions regarding the application or the process, or if the foreign national has questions, it's easy to ask a question via the Communication Center."

"The Envoy-affiliated attorneys respond pretty quickly. I've uploaded documents myself, which is easier than sending them through the mail."

Additionally, Envoy gives foreign nationals access to its online immigration management platform, so they can upload their own documents and pose questions directly to attorneys or the customer support associates.

"Being able to post questions, rather than having to call and leave a message, or send an email and wait for a reply, makes managing the immigration process pretty quick," Simmons says.



Yu-Jin Chou
THE VISA HOLDER

VISA TYPE: H-1B: Person in Specialty Occupation

TITLE: Senior lifestyle editor

JOB DUTIES: Drafts and edits news stories, long-form features, manages photoshoots and other crucial tasks for *Mandarin Quarterly*, a lifestyle magazine geared toward Chinese students and young professionals.



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