

ISF Fuels Growth With Efficient Immigration Practices

Management consulting and information technology (IT) firm ISF has served Florida-based businesses for more than 35 years. In its early years, the company specialized in providing software solutions to healthcare and logistical enterprises, but has since expanded to service seven state governmental agencies. ISF fulfills its mission of helping businesses increase productivity through delivering quality software with its “resources,” a term the firm proudly uses to describe the 48-member staff employed in various technology-based specializations.

ISF places highly skilled application developers, software developers and product managers on a variety of different projects and spends the whole year recruiting for these positions. Ramona Poole, ISF’s human resources coordinator, explains: “As candidates apply during the recruitment process, we are looking at their qualifications and if they are the best fit for a position. Then we look at their hiring requirements. When the market is tight, we have to grab whoever we can.”

In 2008, ISF’s recruitment efforts led to the world of work visa sponsorship. The IT firm retained a local attorney to assist in the petition process and discovered that the efficiency ISF strives to provide clients each day wasn’t standard business practice in the immigration realm. “I had to reach out to the resources [and] get all of their paperwork,” Poole says. “And I had to send that paperwork to the attorney. Once he got it and they formatted it, he would send it back to me to review and approve. And that could be either through snail mail, FedEx or he would email it, depending on what the documents were.”

Dissatisfied by the lack of efficiency, Poole started looking for a better solution. She ultimately settled on Envoy, a technology-driven immigration provider. Since then, ISF has sponsored multiple foreign nationals for H-1B Person in Specialty Occupation visas for various application development, business analysis and project management roles. Additionally, the firm petitions for L-1 Intracompany Transfer visas for work shared with its Colombia-based sister company.



About the Company

Mission

“Serving clients nationwide, ISF is a management consulting and information technology firm committed to helping businesses and government operate better, smarter and more efficiently.”

Impact

ISF’s government clients include Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, New York and North Dakota.

Employees

48

“Our employees love getting that **direct contact from the system and from the attorneys**. They can submit their questions and **they don’t have to worry that there’s an additional charge.**”

The Real Cost of Inefficient Immigration Practices

“A lot of times we decided to put projects on hold or not accept a project because we didn’t have a resource to put on it,” Poole says. “And it was too costly to use a foreign resource. With the reduced costs we were able to process more. We saved probably \$1,000 for each case with Envoy.”

Accomplishing More in Less Time

Before operating under Envoy’s flat-fee system, ISF was billed by the immigration firm on an hourly

basis — which discouraged the company from requesting immigration assistance.

“We had to be careful of how many questions we asked. We didn’t allow the foreign national to contact the attorney, so I was gathering their questions,” Poole says. “With Envoy, when I have a question, I can put it out there and whatever attorney is available can answer that question. It has really improved our response times tremendously.” Plus, foreign nationals are able to access Envoy’s online tool and ask legal questions, which means Poole didn’t always have to act as an intermediary.”

“Our employees love being able go online and upload their documents,” Poole says. “They love getting that direct contact from the system and from the attorneys. They can submit their questions and they don’t have to worry that there’s an additional charge.”

Support at Every Step

The online immigration management platform enables Envoy-retained attorneys to be more efficient in the application process, and ensures that the strongest case possible is prepared for each visa petition.

“For the initial L-1s, we used our previous immigration firm. Out of the three cases we submitted, two of them came back with a request for more evidence,” Poole says. “But with Envoy, the information that we had to provide in the additional request — Envoy asked for that information up front.”

Employers are assigned a dedicated support network, including a customer relationship manager. “If I had a non-legal question, I could ask the customer relationship manager assigned to the cases, and they could guide or walk me through the process,” Poole says. “Sometimes you just need to bounce ideas off of people to see if you’re going the right way.”

Less Time Wasted, More Petitions Processed



A Return on Investment

The Envoy online immigration management platform stores company information and auto-populates forms with this information every time a new case is opened. This reduces the time the immigration manager has to spend filling out the same forms over and over.

“Now that we have gone through the visa application process completely and we have updated the system with all of our corporate data, it’s a breeze for me,” Poole says. “It splits responsibility and each person does their part. Once employees get their paperwork in, it’s in attorney review and I don’t have to get involved until there’s needed corporate documents or updated financials.



Ramona Poole
HR COORDINATOR

EXPERIENCE: More than 20 years

IMMIGRATION ADVICE: “Throughout the application process, the employee is trying to get the opportunity to work and take care of their families. We don’t want to put them through all of this and have the work visa denied. There’s no guarantee but at least we’ve done everything on our end to make sure a strong visa petition is prepared.”



Luz Stella Morales
THE VISA HOLDER

VISA TYPE: L-1B Intracompany Transferee for Employees with Specialized Knowledge

TITLE: Senior Lead Team Developer

EDUCATION:

- M.S. in Information System Management, Norte University in Colombia
- B.S. in Systems Engineering, Industrial University of Santander in Colombia



Jose Avendano
THE VISA HOLDER

VISA TYPE: L-1B Intracompany Transferee for Employees with Specialized Knowledge

TITLE: Web Applications Programmer

EDUCATION:

- B.S. in Systems Engineering, Autonoma del Caribe University, Colombia

