Talent Search

As a service provider, or even a self-performing in-house scan team—big or small—we're faced with the challenge of hiring competent people to maintain, and presumably grow our business. So how do you identify and recruit individuals with the necessary skill set(s) in a 3d imaging business unit? Where do you find people who are trained in data capture (scanning) or 3d modeling? It's a common complaint I hear from colleagues across the country, and a problem that I believe will only get worse with the increasing democratization of 3d imaging.

I don't know if we have it figured out, but currently we employ 33 full time employees who are for the most part either a field technician or a 2d/3d modeling specialist. As far as I know we're one of the largest scanning service providers in North America and we're projecting 50+ employees by the end of the year. So with that as a backdrop, here are some of the things we do that I sincerely hope will help you grow your business.

Hire Talent, Not Skill

My first belief—there *isn't* a plentiful talent pool from which to draw. Historically our industry is still very new and lacks any formalized institutional training and/or continuity in the education material. And how do you effectively for something that its changing so rapidly?

Training is suspect and many times the diversification of the knowledge doesn't exist because the candidate was trained in a particular workflow. (The Civil 3d expert doesn't work well in Revit, etc.)

The first step is to identify the *type of talent* you're seeking based upon your current and future needs. What specific talent does the candidate possess that makes you believe they'll be an addition to yor team? List the types of overall talents you feel are attributes to your organization today and that can be cultivated for tomorrow. Skills are things you can teach; and will need to teach as the technology evolves.

Obviously you then need to have a training program to cultivate for the talent you've hired. Creating this will make your company stronger, and I'd encourage provides for continuous education, and has a performance plan with metrics.

Not all Birds Are Built to Fly

There are too many of us who want the scan technician to be the same person who completes the modeling (processing) of the data. I would suggest that those are different personality types and it's difficult to find someone who is a rock star at both. The field tech is more of a nomadic personality and likes travel/adventure and attacking a project with a mission in mind of what they need to complete today. They like control and a sense of purpose. This is the guy you want to build the deck in your backyard.

Conversely the modeler type person is a little more on the analytical and perhaps even artistic side and would be better at creating a deck digitally to be built in your backyard. Get the difference?

Put the right personality in the right position.

Go Off-shore...Sort of

There is an unbelievably talented group of people in the U.S. who were professionally trained in their country of origin—not the U.S.—but do not perhaps meet the credentials for U.S. licensure. Identify someone who's been trained in engineering, gaming, architecture, interior design, etc., in a different country but may not have accreditation in the U.S. They're

hungry to put their training to use doing something they are passionate about.

(To clarify, I'm not suggesting outsourcing off-shore, and I do *not* believe that works—*ever*. In fact, we have a presentation we give to clients that specifically explains why that doesn't work, but I do believe under the command of a U.S. business there's enormous opportunity to hire and employ people of international origin.)

ITT rocks!

There are a handful of major universities throughout the country who have BIM/VDC programs. This is a fantastic place to find talent—and individuals who are already passionate about our 3d world. However, many of these students can get a little over inflated on what they believe their value might actually be without having real world experience, which usually translates into them wanting a much higher wage.

We've found that utilizing ITT Tech [or similar technical institutes] are a fantastic place to find people who are talented *and* possess the passion for 3d technology. Furthermore, these institutions are typically sensational in helping you pre-screen candidates and will often promote their best talent. Simply put, they become a recruiter on your behalf and it doesn't cost you a penny.

Test in, or Out

It's smart to set up a standardized and universal screening process that all applicants are vetted through that doesn't require any time initially on your part. We use an initial pre-screen aptitude test for any candidate who qualifies. It's standardized and objective in nature and takes about an hour. If the applicate scores sufficiently on the test, they are granted a first interview.

We've had more than a couple get up during the test and walk out, which ultimately is a win/win saving everyone wasted time.

Managers Out!

Many who are in management don't themselves possess the knowledge to fully understand 3d technology, let alone hire someone who says they're competent. In fact, rarely does the guy signing the paycheck have hands on practical knowledge of scanning/modeling. Then does it make sense for them to conduct the initial interviews? No! Get out of the way and have someone who can objectively evaluate a candidate complete that process and have the manager interview the person.

Do you have any idea how many "BIM Professionals" I meet who are running their departments and senior management has no idea they have a bonehead in charge?

Please Share!

I'm sure there are some of you out there who have more valuable ideas—If you're willing to share, then I'll try to include you in an upcoming blog and give you 100% credit. This an area that will help us all help our industry. I can be reached via email at ken@eco3dusa.com.

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