Perry-Martel International Inc.
200-440 Laurier Ave. West,
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada,
K1R 7X6

CASE STUDY

REVOLUTIONIZING SAAS SALES LEADERSHIP

Company: Protus IP Solutions
Position: Vice President of Sales
Industry: SAAS

Joseph Nour
CEO - Protus IP Solutions

A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH

Prior to the company's acquisition by J2 Global Communications Inc., **Protus IP Solutions CEO Joseph Nour had interviewed almost 90 candidates himself for the company's vice-president of sales opening without having made an offer.**

So he turned to David Perry and Perry-Martel International to find the perfect candidate.

"Execution and commitment are absolutely essential to any strategy or initiative in an era too full of plans, process and procrastination. **You may have a technology which gives you an edge, but your people determine whether you win.**

David gets that. He delivered only the best."

REVOLUTIONIZING SAAS SALES LEADERSHIP: THE PROTUS IP SOLUTIONS SUCCESS STORY THROUGH STRATEGIC EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT

CHALLENGE

Amidst rapid growth and evolving market demands, Protus IP Solutions faced a critical bottleneck: the need for a transformative leader in its sales division. Despite exhaustive efforts by CEO Joseph Nour, including interviewing 84 candidates over a year, no hire could navigate the fast-paced, innovative demands of the SaaS environment. Protus needed a VP of Sales who not only understood the technical intricacies but could also drive substantial growth.

Perry-Martel's Strategic Intervention:

Engaged to break the recruitment stalemate, Perry-Martel International activated its proprietary Inside-Out Approach. This method wasn't about filling a position but rather about aligning Protus's revolutionary aspirations with a leader's vision and execution capabilities.

STRATEGY

The Inside-Out Approach in Action:

1. **Needs Analysis:** The position profile detailed a role that was not merely managerial but revolutionary—requiring a leader capable of handling a high-velocity sales environment and scaling business operations internationally.
2. **Candidate Identification:** Rudy Richman, previously identified but not utilized in another search due to a cultural mismatch, was re-engaged. His history as a high-achieving drummer and his proven track record in transforming sales environments made him an ideal candidate for the high-stakes role at Protus.
3. **Engagement and Persuasion:** Through personalized engagement that highlighted Protus's innovative platform and Richman's potential impact, Perry-Martel not only piqued his interest but also aligned his career aspirations with Protus's strategic goals.
4. **Validation and Closure:** Endorsements from significant figures like Joseph Nour underscored Perry-Martel's commitment to understanding and fulfilling Protus's needs, which was instrumental in persuading Richman to join the team.

RESULTS

Rudy Richman's leadership transformed Protus. Under his direction, the company's sales soared from $14 million to $77 million within six years. His strategic initiatives led to a significant increase in customer base and culminated in a lucrative acquisition by a major competitor for $213 million, a triple-revenue multiple.

This case study exemplifies how Perry-Martel International's Inside-Out Approach transforms executive recruitment into a strategic asset, aligning visionary leaders with roles that redefine industries. If your organization is poised for transformation and requires leadership that can navigate and capitalize on the complexities of modern markets, contact Perry-Martel International.

We don't just fill roles; we fulfill corporate legacies.

Check the interview for more.

CASE INTERVIEW

Kevin Donlin from the Minneapolis Star Tribune interviews former Protus IP Solutions Vice President of Sales Rudy Richman, following the company's acquisition. Rudy reported directly to CEO Joseph Nour.

KEVIN DONLIN
EDITOR - MINN. STAR TRIBUNE

RUDY RICHMAN
VP SALES - PROTUS IP SOLUTIONS

KEVIN DONLIN
Hi, this is Kevin Donlin from the Minneapolis Star Tribune. I'm on the phone with Rudy Richman, Vice President of Operations for OnPath Business Solutions in Ottawa, Ontario. We're going to talk a bit, Rudy, about your experience working with David Perry and Perry Martel International. Rudy, thanks for joining me today.

RUDY RICHMAN
Thanks for inviting me.

KEVIN DONLIN
This is going to be different from most of the interviews folks have heard about executive recruiter David Perry and his search firm, because we're going to give both perspectives here in the next few minutes – the candidate's perspective, and then the employer's perspective in hiring David to do a search. So let's go back a few years, if I understand correctly, you first met David Perry in 1999. Is that correct?

RUDY RICHMAN
That is correct.

KEVIN DONLIN
But you weren't placed right away by him. When did you first actually get into a position where David placed you?

RUDY RICHMAN

It was actually five or six years later when he called to place me for a company in Ottawa called Protus IP Solutions. Frankly even though there was a six year gap between our initial meeting and my placement, I think it really beholds the type of recruiter that David is and what really sets him apart from others in the field.

The reason why I say that and I've used David since he placed me at Protus, I hired him twice to find a key position for me in my sales department.

One of the things that David does that other recruiters just don't, is he listens, he actually listens to your requirements as an employer – who it is that you're looking for, what the qualities are, what the qualifications are, and he tries to quantify and understand what the ideal candidate is going to be like. I find most recruiters don't do that. They take a bunch of notes, they will promise you that they've got lots of people in their database that fit the description and then there's the deluge of resumes generally with candidates that don't fit the bill. What I like… The fact that he was able to…

KEVIN DONLIN

Sorry I interrupted. Go ahead.

RUDY RICHMAN

What I like about David is that when I met him for the first time in 1999, we spent over 2 hours together and it was 2 of the most engaging hours I think I've ever had, with anybody, any time, in my professional career.He's an engaging individual and we spent a lot of time talking about what my value to previous companies had been, what my value to sales organizations had been, and the kind of value and role that I think I would see myself playing for other companies in the future.

David did have an opportunity at the time, which is why we met, but it wasn't right for me. But he promised me that when he did call me, the opportunity that he would find and eventually call me for would fit like a glove. He wouldn't waste my time, and that it would be something that he was sure that I would be a perfect fit for. That promise rang true, because when he called me in 2004 for Protus, it truly ended up to be one of the best job experiences of my life. The opportunity based on my qualifications and what I felt I could offer - really did fit like a glove.

KEVIN DONLIN

I've already seen some of the numbers that you were responsible for once David put you in at Protus. I would just like to read them back to you to confirm them, because they seem a bit incredible. You took the company from approximately $14 million in revenue to $77 million in revenue in about six and a half years, is that correct?

RUDY RICHMAN

That is.

KEVIN DONLIN

And what was your role there again? You were vice president of sales?

RUDY RICHMAN

My role was VP of Sales. Now Protus was a company that had a dual prong sales approach, so we had one approach that sold to customers over the web. I must share our company's growth with our VP of Marketing whose name was Steve Adams, because our company philosophy was to drive people to the web and hopefully people would sign up on the web. But as we know in today's business, anybody that just thinks people will buy from them on the web fails.

So it was my job to assemble an organization that would catch that group of people - the overflow of people that went to the web, and who read the information, but decided they had questions and then would call us. I assembled the team to catch those calls and convert those queries to paying customers. We took their credit card number and signed them up on the phone on the first call over sixty percent of the time.

KEVIN DONLIN

Wow.

RUDY RICHMAN

The other thing we did was corporate and major account sales, which was more of a traditional enterprise sale approach, selling the same product but to larger corporations.

KEVIN DONLIN

Now some more numbers here, Rudy, you enabled a $213 million exit as a result of this, because the company went from being a new entry in the industry to number2 in just about six and a half years. You were bought by the number 1 company in the sector, correct?

RUDY RICHMAN

That is correct. It was an excellent exit at two-and-one-half times annual revenue, or somewhere along those lines and so it was quite successful.

KEVIN DONLIN

And according to David's records, this was, he does have a thumb on the pulse of everything going on in Ontario Canada, and all of North America, but really inOttawa, but according to David, it was the only profitable exit of a company in Ottawa during that ten year period when it occurred. So it was just good all around. We could go deeper into that, but another story here, kind of a back story – it is my understanding is correct, you stepped into a company that was floundering because David tells me the CEO had interviewed 87 people for the VP of Sales role for over a year and had hired nobody. David was brought in and he found you. So could you speak to that a bit. Did you have a sense that you were coming into a place that was a bit unsettled, and there was a bit of chaos, and you just happened to be the right fit for the position.

RUDY RICHMAN

Well, I could easily say that I was the company savior! But, it was a testament to David's recruiting skills and how he handled the relationship with the company that employed him.

And it goes back to a story that I was telling before, I think he stands head and shoulders above the rest of the recruiters that I've either worked with in the past or companies that I have worked with in the past. They just don't seem to listen and they just don't seem to find the right candidate.

Nowadays there are plenty of ways for companies to go out and find their own candidate. If I just want a whole bunch of names I can go to LinkedIn, I can go to my competitors on LinkedIn and find people with suitable qualifications, send them an email and make them an offer.

But that is not the reason why you hire a recruiter. You hire a recruiter to go out and find the right individual, hopefully they already know individuals that will fit the bill, and have that relationship that's going to allow them to build the bridge between you, the person that is looking, and they, the person who may not even be looking for a new job. They may be content, but if that recruiter can position the new opportunity in a way that is beneficial for both, then there is a potential deal.

KEVIN DONLIN

I think you're proving the idea that the candidate placed is only as good as the potential pool of candidates and LinkedIn has got everybody, but only David has a database of candidates that include people like you. So working with a recruiter like David, you're going to get access the absolute cream of the crop and that's just one of the reasons that folks might want to talk to David, in my experience. The final question – I wanted to switch gears here now. You actually hired David to perform searches for you in 2005 and 2008. Would you like to speak to one of those experiences and how it went from the employer's perspective?

RUDY RICHMAN

Sure. Well the hire in 2008 was for a director of our web sales team also called our telesales team. This was the team that was there to catch that overflow, the queries from people that had hit our website and had bunch of questions. So we had initially started this with a small team of 2 or 3 reps. But as the number of visitors to our website grew each month, obviously the number of callers to this team grew.

By the time we sold the company in December of 2010, we were signing 22,000 new customers per month….every single month. So about fifteen thousand of those signed up over the web and about seven thousand came to my two sales teams. So we had to scale and grow this team rapidly. We were looking for somebody that had experience in both inbound and outbound telesales, and what it would take to grow an organization that was metric based, heavily metrics oriented. Even though we had a consultative front end sales process that was meant to engage, educate and close prospects very, very quickly, we needed somebody that also had big sales team experience.

The difficulty is finding somebody that had consultative sales team experience as opposed to just running a call center. There were a lot of call centers in Ottawa at the time. Many of them have since closed down, but many of the inbound call centers were just customer service oriented. So our search was complex because we needed to find somebody that could grow the team from what was about fifteen or sixteen at the time. We eventually got it to about thirty, but if we hadn't made the exit and hadn't sold the company, it would have easily grown to 75, or to 80-100 over the course of the next few years. We needed somebody that understood the automation behind that, the technology that was going to be required and some of the associative metrics that were a little bit different than the corporate sales side. We did actually engage and even tried a few other recruiters in Ottawa because David had been engaged by us a few times and HR wanted to try somebody else. I was frankly very disappointed. We just didn't get the results that we were looking for, so we fell back on our old stalwart, David, who has not ever failed us. And yes, he did find a candidate for us.

KEVIN DONLIN

Terrific. So that worked out for you and that was just one of the two times you hired him. Rudy we could dig a lot deeper, and we may have to do another interview. This has been very helpful. You have provided a lot of background and what it's like to work with David Perry and Perry Martel International. Rudy Richman,
I'd like to thank you very much.

RUDY RICHMAN

Thanks very much Kevin,
I appreciate it.

Perry-Martel International Inc.
200-440 Laurier Ave. West,
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada,
K1R 7X6

PROCESS: THE INSIDE OUT APPROACH

STATS AT A GLANCE

CLIENT INFO

Name: **Protus IP Solutions**
Industry: **SAAS**
Role: **Vice-President of Sales**

SEARCH INFO

Candidates Contacted: **24**
Screening Interviews: **17**
Search Committee Interviews: **3**
Candidates Presented: **3**

Time to 1st Interview: **9 days**
Time to Offer: **32 days**

Growth: **450% in 6 Years**
Exit: **213 Million**

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For transformative leadership solutions that align with your strategic goals, reach out to Perry-Martel International at:

- Phone: 613-236-6995
- Email: dperry@perrymartel.com
- Website: Visit our website

Let us help you find not just any leader, but the right leader.