

The

NAVIGATOR



Is there a spring in your step?

If so, there is good reason! Earlier predictions of a strong 1st quarter have come true and the staffing industry shows no signs of slowing down. Industry reports are showing that not only have we met initial expectations, but exceeded them for a second year in a row.

Proof of this lies right here at TCM. We are honored and proud to share with our clients, consultants and employees the following exciting news!

BBJ PACESETTERS — Recognizing The Region's Fastest Growing Private Companies

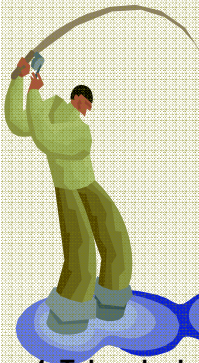
Friday, April 13th, the Boston Business Journal hosted "Pacesetters: Recognizing the Region's Fastest-Growing Private Companies" -- and counted down the region's top fastest-growing private companies.

This first annual event recognized 60 companies (out of almost 700 respondents) and featured a panel of seasoned executives whose companies have made this prestigious list and who shared their strategies for successfully managing a growth company over the last four years. The Computer Merchant, Ltd. was invited to be part of this year's event and has received another esteemed award for growth. (The ranking was based upon percentage of growth from 2003 through 2006).

Out of the 60 companies recognized - TCM was ranked #47!

Additional information is posted on the BBJ website pertaining to both the publication and the companies that were selected. The rankings should be listed shortly at: <http://www.bizjournals.com/boston>.

Congratulations to all who made this possible! This was a team effort and we share this award with everyone who contributed to making TCM the successful company it is today....our extraordinary consultants, our valued clients and our invaluable employees.



Four Tips On Hooking That Perfect Hire

Staffing experts offer these four tips for IT managers scratching their heads over which candidates to bring on board:

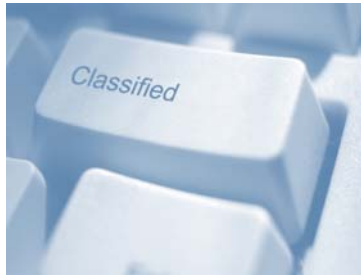
1. Ask a lot of questions: Can this person do what their resume says they have done? Will they fit into the culture of our company and my department? Do they have the soft skills to work within our environment? If they are capable technically, are we going to be able to keep them happy, and for how long?

2. Think about the long haul. During the interview process, there is more of a shift toward hiring for the future. Ask applicants what their long-term goals are. Figure out whether there are opportunities now or opportunities that might exist down the road to match those goals. It doesn't make sense to hire someone if you can't keep them long term.

3. Scout out team players. Look for experience in software development in a team environment, hopefully as a team leader, ideally as a project manager.

4. Take a look around. "The most cost-effective strategy for hiring managers is to draw on your own pool of talent," notes a senior research adviser from an advisory firm in Atlanta. "Development of internal career paths and training curricula is critical. Being well-positioned inside the organization is important."

Source: *Computerworld*



Did you also know??

As if tax time wasn't scary enough...

Nearly 500 IRS laptops.....

Many likely containing unencrypted personal information of taxpayers — were lost or stolen over a 30-month period ending in June 2006, according to an audit released last month. The audit, conducted by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, found that between January 2, 2003, and June 13, 2006, a "large number" of laptops were stolen from the vehicles and homes of IRS employees, while 111 were stolen from various agency facilities.

Ten....The number of FBI laptops with sensitive or classified information lost in the past 44 months.

Three to Four....The number of laptops lost each month by the FBI.

NEW PROJECTS NEWS...NEW PROJECTS

1. We continue to win an significant amount of J2EE requirements around the country. Recently TCM won a project for a large nationwide retailer that will continue for the next two and a half years.
2. We have struck a major contract with an international integrator which will provide us with a substantial amount of work in the healthcare industry. We are placing a large number of Business Analyst, Program Analyst and Software Developers with Oracle, ERP and SAP skills – this will ongoing for the next 18 months.
3. We have won a key project at a Major New England-based Financial Institution in the analytical and quality assurance areas.
4. We have also signed on with a Fortune 100 Systems Integrator in the Healthcare vertical.
5. We have also struck a deal with a Mid-market Systems Integrator placing Quality Assurance and Technical Documentation Specialist.
6. One of our key clients, a preeminent global financial services company has awarded TCM the following exciting opportunities:
 7. Non-Networked Computers: This project will replace approximately 4,000 user owned non standard PCs in approximately 450 locations with a Client approved solution.
 8. CIS: This project will entail installation/conversion of existing client specific application to current Investment Services users.
 9. Scanner Upgrade: This project will replace the Legacy Scanner, Desktop and Scanner software.
 10. Voice Over IP: This project will replace the legacy telephone systems with a Voice Over IP solution.
11. TCM has been chosen to assist an International Telecom Integrator with a VOIP implementation at a large social services agency in New England. TCM will be performing site surveys at 150 locations across the state and will work on the network gear deployment as well as the telephone setup. TCM is working with many large integrator organizations on VOIP implementations and looks to fill an expanded role in this ever increasing market. For additional information about the VOIP projects implementation process and experience that TCM has, please contact Lee McCartney at LMcCartney@TCML.com.
12. One of our Fortune 500 clients, which is a \$4.6 billion company and a leading provider of top name-brand IT computing products, software and advanced IT services and their end client, a global leader in providing behavior-based communications, has engaged TCM to assist in updating more than 8,000 printers at over 1,000 grocery stores throughout the U.S. TCM was initially awarded 44% of the sites, however after a few weeks of performing above and beyond, they pulled some sites from other partners and gave them to TCM. This opportunity has been so successful that TCM has been short-listed to help this client support future projects.

Individual commitment to a group effort -- that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.

~ Vince Lombardi



TCM is averaging new business closes at a rate of 200+ per month, all long term in duration. TCM Direct, our full time placement service, has made key technology placements in the past several months alone with more to come. This is an exciting time with great opportunities available. Watch for more great announcements in the quarter ahead!

Front Desk Spotlight



Most all of our readers, Client or Consultant, have had the occasion to call our main switchboard here at The Computer Merchant, Ltd. In doing so, you have inevitably spoken to one of our three Receptionists Lisa Whitman, Rachell Scholl and Rachele Barnes.

Lisa Whitman, Front Desk Supervisor, has been with TCM for three years and knows the phone system inside and out. Lisa is in charge of day to day operations and training anyone who sits at the front desk as a Receptionist. Lisa, Rachell and Rachele understand the importance of a caller's first impression and runs the front desk with professionalism and efficiency.

TCM's switchboard receives up to **700-900 calls per day** and at certain "high traffic times" can receive up to **120 calls per hour**.

In this day of modern technology and automated **everything**, it is certainly nice to receive a professional and welcoming voice rather than to be greeted with a machine or to be abandoned to a "telephone tree". TCM recognizes the value of your time and wants to handle all your calls personally and professionally.



As some of our readers may be aware, The Computer Merchant, Ltd. is a Veteran owned company. During the 1960's, founder, President & CEO, John Danieli, served in the Marine Corps before starting his IT career and launching The Computer Merchant, Ltd.

Recently, due to the conflicts overseas, there has been an emphasis in the staffing industry on job placement for our returning soldiers and some of the difficulties they face during the transition.

Part of TCM's services focus on identifying employment opportunities for returning Veterans. TCM is also reaching out to spouses of Veterans who may be seeking opportunities. It is a tangible gesture of the support our company can provide during a difficult and stressful time in their lives.

Below are some interesting statistics:

- 225,000 separate from the military each year.
- 7.3 million Veterans are disabled and many of them are seeking employment.
- 8 million active Reservists and Veterans work in the civilian sector.
- 40,000 active, reserve and civilian jobs are being cut by the military.
- 39% of unemployed spouses are seeking full-time employment.
- 51.4% of active service members are married, only half are employed.

Source: Armed Forces Connection

Four Tips for Landing an IT Job

Job applicants scouring the market for sought-after IT posts might want to heed these four tips offered by a handful of employment experts:

- 1. Do your research.** Candidates should take the initiative to understand what the company is trying to achieve from an overall business standpoint — for example, better products, an expanding product line, efficiencies, market domination, etc.
- 2. Go to school.** Getting a degree from a well-known school is important and valued and it is believed that degrees are worth at least a 20% premium.
- 3. Choose the right path.** "Opportunities now include e-commerce/MBA hybrids or even programs offered online," says a professor and chairman of the IT department at RIT. "What I do not recommend is the quick fix that certifications give. Most of them will help a person get hired, but without serious and continual studying or personal retraining, a person will become marginalized quickly."
- 4. Get the right degree.** Consider master's-level work in software development and management, knowledge management systems, networking or systems integration.

Source: Computerworld

Is there anyone out there??



In any business, it is extremely frustrating not being able to reach someone when necessary. Recognizing this, TCM has made it even easier for our staff to stay connected to our Clients and Consultants. In March 2007, the TCM Resource and Marketing staff were assigned new or upgraded Blackberrys, making it possible to stay connected 24/7.

"Being available for our clients and consultants is essential to providing excellent service. Various work schedules, time zones and other such demands make it imperative to be accessible at all times"

~ John Danieli, President & CEO of The Computer Merchant, Ltd.

Staffing Industry Staying Strong

Many staffing executives are upbeat about 2007. They predict it will be a good year filled with active growth. Staffing executives and others in the industry are feeling positive about 2007 and what it will bring. Staffing firms are slightly more optimistic about revenue growth in 2007 than they were in 2006, with median forecasted growth of 12% for 2007 versus 10% for 2006, according to Staffing Industry Analysts research. Currently, **the most optimistic segment is tech/engineering, where the median firm projects 21% growth in 2007, compared with 14% in 2006.**

Some of the many priorities execs say they have on the agenda this year include opening new offices, adding staff, expanding divisions and beefing up technology. Many staffing companies expanded in 2006 and that trend is expected to continue this year and this includes global markets, taking advantage of the world's global hot spots such as China, India and the Pacific Rim.

Don't Forget ...

About TCM's referral program. Referral of a new contract employee that works a minimum of 320 hours can earn you \$250.00!! If you have any questions or require further details, please contact your Account Executive or Recruiter.



Talking the Talk

Your top skills haven't changed much, but CIOs from large and midsize companies emphasize leading and motivating staff, while CIOs at small companies focus more on their own technical proficiency.

The personal skills most pivotal for your success as a CIO:

- Ability to communicate effectively
- Strategic thinking and planning
- Ability to lead/motivate staff
- Understanding of business processes and operations
- Ability to influence change in others
- Understanding of industry trends and business strategy
- Negotiation skills
- Thorough knowledge of technology options
- Technical proficiency

~ CIO Magazine



Ohh Behaaaave.....

One trend the staffing industry will see this year is an increase in behavioral testing – assessing candidates not just for their skill set but for cultural fit. Behavioral testing was hot in 2006 and will be even more popular in 2007. “We’re finding that is one of the criteria that is critical for success at a company,” says one staffing industry executive. Background checks are not only on the rise this year, but most companies are making it mandatory. “More companies will do it to protect themselves across the board whether the customer has asked for it or not,” he adds. The cost associated with background and drug testing is not inexpensive. On average, it costs an employer \$80-\$100 per person.

Online testing and training are expected to increase as well, as more staffing companies see the value in making sure their candidates are truly qualified for the job. Staffing companies perceive online testing and training as a value-added service that they provide for contingent workers that tends to facilitate retention.

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