

Human Resource Management

Business Services PEO

Infiniti HR
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Scott Smrkovski
CEO

BIO: As the principal visionary behind the unprecedented growth of leading PEO and national human resources firm, Infiniti HR, Scott Smrkovski is quickly becoming recognized as one of the nation's leading innovators in the HR industry. With more than 25 years of executive management experience, Smrkovski focuses on profitability and client satisfaction in a dynamic marketplace while creating an environment conducive for learning and change. Experience as both a motivational speaker and corporate trainer, Smrkovski is adept at providing scalable solutions that achieve a client retention rate above 95 percent in the areas of payroll, human re-

sources, risk management, employee benefits, recruitment process outsourcing and franchise solutions. Named a Smart100 CEO in 2010 and a 2013 SmartCEO Voltage Award Finalist as a leader in technology, Smrkovski is an innovative, resourceful and devoted entrepreneur. His knowledge in all areas of human resources outsourcing has been pivotal in the development of Infiniti HR's extensive expansion efforts into new markets across the nation. Smrkovski has helped the company approach 20,000 co-employees, provide service to more than 600 businesses in 46 states and increase system-wide revenue to more than \$148 million—an increase of 1,255 percent since its inception in 2008. He currently assists Infiniti HR clients in strategic planning; preventative employee relations; contract negotiations; training and development and generalist human resources issues.

About Infiniti HR:

At Infiniti HR, we help companies reduce costs by effectively managing human resource (HR) functions while allowing businesses to focus on their core operations that impact profitability. We offer our expertise to effectively manage critical HR responsibilities and employer risks for clients of any size. We can help you navigate increasingly complex employee related matters including payroll, human resource compliance, employee benefits and risk management services, through professional employer organization (PEO) environments or administrative service organization (ASO) arrangements. We act as a single source provider of integrated services that ensure your company is operating in keeping with Fair Labor Standards Act, COBRA laws, handling

payroll services and managing any workers' compensation issues.

Infiniti HR realizes that all companies have different needs, and that everyone might not be looking for the complete solution, so we have developed the most customizable and flexible service options in our industry. Our options include any combination of the services below:

PEO / ASO
Payroll and Tax Services
Employee Benefits
Human Resource Consulting
Recruitment Process Outsourcing

Interview conducted by:
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor
CEOCFO Magazine

CEOCFO: Mr. Smrkovski, would you tell us about Infiniti HR?

Mr. Smrkovski: Infiniti HR is a full-service, customizable human resources outsourcing company, which has a variety of solutions under the categories of payroll, HR, benefits, benefit administration and risk management. One of our primary models is called PEO or Professional Employer Organization, and that is where we establish a co-employment relationship with our client companies and pull them under one umbrella, so that we get economies at scale for all those services as well as insurance products and benefits.

CEOCFO: Are PEOs growing in general?

Mr. Smrkovski: Yes, the market itself is growing. Based on the latest industry statistics, it was about seven percent last year.

CEOFO: Would you tell us a little more specifically about the services you offer? What is an example of a common service as well as one that might be a little more unusual?

Mr. Smrkovski: Traditionally in the PEO industry, they have a cookie-cutter approach where a PEO creates a box that contains a service, a box that contains a health plan, and this is how everything works. We have created a model that is completely customizable and flexible, so that all the things are interchangeable, services can be added and removed, and that is what really sets us apart in our industry.

CEOFO: When you are first speaking with a potential customer, do they understand the concept and difference in your company immediately?

Mr. Smrkovski: It depends on if they have any experience in the PEO world, or they have used one or if they are using one, and if they are familiar with it and how it works. In that case, it is a very short, simple process of explaining the difference and their understanding. If they do not have any background with a PEO, do not know what one is, or how one works, then it does take some time to explain.

CEOFO: How do people find you? What kind of outreach do you do for new customers?

Mr. Smrkovski: We have three main ways of going about getting business. Being in business a long time, we have a large network of contacts that we obviously have worked with over the years. That is one prong that we use. Almost all of our marketing money is spent through web optimization, pay per click type ads, and consultant partnerships on the web. A lot of people find us through the web these days. The third avenue is, our heavy involvement in the International Franchise Association, where we work with creating customized solutions at the franchisor level for their franchises. We analyze what a typical franchise looks like, customize a solution for them specifically, pitch it to the franchisor to get them involved and receive their

approval, and then roll it down to the franchises. Those are our three main focuses at the moment, but we do other little things here and there.

CEOFO: With the franchises, was that opportunistic did you look to target that market because you saw a particular need?

Mr. Smrkovski: Initially, we got involved with some people who had become the franchisor for a couple franchises about six years back. After we proved the model, we realized we could replicate it. We went out and found someone who was very familiar with working in that space and brought them on board. That was basically his job and target.

CEOFO: You announced a new corporate perks program for clients and employees. Would you tell us about that?

Mr. Smrkovski: Essentially, it is a corporate perks program that has

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discounts, benefits, and things that are available to all of our client companies and their employees. It is all done through the web. You sign up and you can go on the site and search for specific things and discounts. In addition, we will be adding different things during different times of the year, as well as taking requests from our employee base and searching out discounts and things for them. It is another nice add-on service that gives a small business a big-company feel.

CEOFO: What might be some of the other things you are thinking of adding or tweaking?

Mr. Smrkovski: There are always different deliverables to the clients in the online space. We have toyed with different things and experimented with different things over the years, but eventually we will probably have a completely automated online enrollment and onboarding process for employees to include everything with new hire paperwork as well as

benefits. We have tried it in the past but I do not think the market was quite ready for it yet. We are seeing it get to the point where it is starting to be now. We will probably eventually move in that direction. The other thing is probably mobile application, so that employees will be able to have an app on their phone, access their personal information, copy and view pay stubs, see their benefits, and all that good stuff.

CEOFO: Would you give us an example outside traditional methods and how you were able to accommodate that?

Mr. Smrkovski: For example, one of our franchise groups that happen to be in the companion care space has a lot of employees, a lot of turnover, and a lot of support from an HR perspective from their corporate office. They do not have a lot of benefits because they do not have a lot of full-time personnel. Those are the three main areas that a lot of times would create a lot of the work we provide and a lot of the cost to our service. We were able to work with their corporate office in conjunction with the level of

service they are providing, what they really need, and really tailor a solution that is far more cost effective than they could find out in the marketplace on their own.

CEOFO: Are you involved with healthcare benefits?

Mr. Smrkovski: Yes.

CEOFO: How are you dealing with the new Affordable Care Act?

Mr. Smrkovski: The biggest thing is trying to keep on top of what is going on and trying to keep our customers in the loop. Early on, we tried to educate them about everything. Then with everything changing, not working, and being revised, it has gotten to a point that we backed off somewhat of letting them know everything. It is just too confusing. We just let them know we will keep them in the loop when something is important, but that we have it covered for the time being. There is a lot of uncertainty right now, as to what is going to work, what is

not going to work, what changes are going to look like, and what the pricing is going to look like. It is definitely affecting very specific segments of the markets in different ways. It is a work in progress still.

CEO CFO: How do you keep on top of a situation like this?

Mr. Smrkovski: A lot of it is that we are tied into a lot of people in the industry because of the number of employees we service and the amount of benefits that we provide. There are a lot of people in the insurance industry who we work with who have updates and provide us with the most recent information regarding different lobbying companies and things like that. We get information from all different sources because we are very tied into the industry.

CEO CFO: What is ahead for Infiniti?

Mr. Smrkovski: Next year I think is going to be a big year from an expansion standpoint. We are looking to allocate some more resources on the sales side and add another big heavy hitter on our sales team. We recently expanded last year out into the Scottsdale area, and that office is really getting up to speed right now. We expect a lot of production to continue from there. We also have a

big, non-profit venture that we are working on and hoping to launch at the beginning of the year. We should be able to provide a very attractive option for that segment of the market.

CEO CFO: Why is now the opportune time for that decision?

Mr. Smrkovski: I think it is a part of the market that is really ignored. I do not think a lot of people focus on it and it does not show up in any of the government reports for employment or anything like that. However, it is a very significant segment, and we have some people with expertise in dealing with a non-profit unemployment trust. There are very few competitors in that space. I think it will help us create a very niche segment that we can capitalize on.

CEO CFO: Infiniti was on the Inc. list, so clearly business is good. What is the key to running a successful organization?

Mr. Smrkovski: There are so many different answers to that question, but I think it is having the right people and making sure everyone is on board with the same type of service and message that you want to provide to your customers. Obviously, treating the customers correct and providing them with value is the number one

thing in order to keep your business going. I think it is sales focus and people focus internally as well as having the right people. Your employees should be people who work hard, are interested in what they do, and care that they are doing a good job as well as care about the customers. Ultimately, if you can get that and you know what you are doing, I think everything else will come into place.

CEO CFO: Our readers are primarily in the business and investment community. Why should they pay attention to Infiniti HR?

Mr. Smrkovski: I think that the HR and benefits space is so confusing for the smaller companies that at this time without having a resource or someone to help you through the process; you are left to go at it alone and do the best you can do. I think that is one of the big reasons why the small companies look to partner with a company such as ours. It is not getting any better – there are more rules, more regulations, and more changes every day. I think we are a great solution for that, and we are looking to add things, add product, innovate, and move forward.



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