

Roland Goity

### ***WorkforceLogic/Brocade Case Study***

Theresa Uchida's job is a hectic one. As director of global recruitment for San Jose-based Brocade Communications Systems, Uchida oversees the human resource needs of a publicly-traded company with offices in France, Germany, Hong Kong, Beijing and twelve other locations in Europe and Asia. What's more, that figure doesn't include the company's contingent workforce. And, as Brocade became the leading provider of storage applications networks, its growth included not only annual revenue to the tune of half-a-billion dollars, but a contingent workforce of independent contractors, consultants, advisors, and temporary workers that nearly doubled from 2002 to 2004.

With such growth in their contingent workforce came considerable challenges. Brocade needed to create a centralized process to facilitate the hiring and tracking of such workers, eliminate related cost inefficiencies, and mitigate associated risks and liabilities among other issues. So Brocade turned to WorkforceLogic, whose Web-based software solution and on-site support give global 2000 companies everything they need to effectively manage contingent workforces. As well as a boon to Brocade's HR department—Uchida calls WorkforceLogic her “number one vendor of choice”—WorkforceLogic's solution has drawn praise from Brocade's finance, legal, and purchasing departments, as well those departments that use contingent personnel.

Since Brocade has adopted WorkforceLogic's solution, its hiring of contingent workers has become an automated, uniform process—for example, a tech expert from a staffing agency in Silicon Valley undergoes the same hiring practices as an independent contractor hired by one of Brocade's sales offices in Europe. Uchida says hiring managers used to be saddled with myriad questions regarding policy and procedure. But now they just log on and enter the information in “one of the best tools I've seen.” Requests are automatically sent to staffing agencies and only the best candidates are presented. Hiring managers can once again focus on their main objectives while human

resource requirements are automatically handled through WorkforceLogic. When a contingent worker is hired, all necessary provisions are quickly addressed—operations, IT and accounting are immediately notified so the proper workspace and equipment are ready, security badges are issued, and payroll is updated.

According to Uchida, a number of factors led to Brocade's selection of WorkforceLogic. For one, it's intuitive and easy to use. Since so many departments and managers get involved in hiring contingent workers, a user-friendly application was a necessity. It also works seamlessly with other programs. More importantly, it's a vendor-neutral solution so Brocade didn't have to worry about conflicts of interest. On-site support, too, was a determining factor in the selection. WorkforceLogic not only develops a customized solution based upon the given needs of a corporation and its individual departments, a WorkforceLogic program manager remains on site to provide further training, customization and ongoing support. To Uchida, this is invaluable: "I have a dedicated, trusted partner right in the office. I just pick up the phone and dial the program manager who answers my questions and takes charge of everything."

WorkforceLogic is bringing efficiency and effectiveness not only to Uchida and the HR group, but also to Brocade's purchasing department where the procurement process is handled automatically. Hiring managers no longer need to create individual purchase requisitions that require their own separate approval; Brocade's accounts payable team simply cuts one check to WorkforceLogic. Thanks to built-in safeguards, the system ensures that all of Brocade's contingent workers are compliant with laws and regulations relating to contractor employment. As Uchida says: "In a Sarbanes-Oxley world where controls must be in place, WorkforceLogic provides them automatically."

WorkforceLogic also notifies department personnel when employment contracts of contingent workers expire, ensuring that security measures, such as de-activating security badges and computer passwords, are taken to mitigate any risk or future liability to company property and trade secrets. No wonder Uchida says "it's not just an HR application, but one that has positive effects on the whole company."

WorkforceLogic's biggest supporters, though, are usually those who watch the bottom line. The WorkforceLogic solution brings immediate dividends to a company's return on investment. Once the system is employed, it can raise flags on vendor fees, spotting exorbitant hourly costs that are out of line with industry norms. It can also detect hidden costs that are hitherto unknown, such as vendors charging blanket fees for projects that, once delineated, reveal wasteful, inefficient spending. There are intangible benefits, too. It saves countless staff hours by alleviating many of the previously mentioned tasks involved in hiring, tracking, provisioning and managing a contingent workforce, allowing Brocade personnel to focus this time on other important objectives. Such savings can't be measured in dollar signs, but their notable effects resonate company-wide.

While the power and efficiency of the WorkforceLogic application and its tremendous cost benefits aren't lost on Uchida, neither is its reliability. "Since we've been using the WorkforceLogic system, it's never gone down," she says. "I can't say that about any other software package we've used." —Still another reason why Brocade stays ahead of the curve, efficiently managing a flexible, on-demand global workforce and why Theresa Uchida's job is a little less hectic.

###