

## Recruiting Productivity Platform Services



**Jay Barnett**  
Founder & Chief Products  
Officer

### About Decision Toolbox

On the outside, Decision Toolbox is a recruitment products and services company known for the passion and creativity we bring to the table. But on the inside, we are a veritable R&D lab obsessed with innovating and optimizing recruitment productivity, quality and service. You will not find a group of people more zealous about this than our team.

Founded in 1992, the company is a 100% virtual organization with employees across the U.S. We are widely known for our unconventional, award winning culture and our ability to attract and retain the best recruiting talent in the market. And because we have no walls or windows, we are able to pass those cost savings along to our clients.

Decision Toolbox has taken a leadership role in almost every aspect of recruitment, including introducing an RPO offering years before it became industry practice. On the technology side, our (in-house developed) recruiting productivity platform astonishes candidates, clients and our own users with the way it wraps around every step of every process to build in both quality and efficiency. We are recognized as a thought leader by organizations such as SHRM, PIHRA, and the NHRA, are a four time winner of the Alfred P. Sloan Award for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility, and are a five time winner of HRO's Baker's Dozen top on-demand RPO companies. Decision Toolbox is also certified by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) as a Women Owned Business.

**Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine**

### **CEOCFO: Mr. Barnett, what is the concept for Decision Toolbox?**

**Mr. Barnett:** Decision Toolbox is a recruiting company, but not the kind of recruiting company that most people think about. Usually when you think of recruiting firms, you think of ridiculously expensive headhunters. We are the antithesis of that. Traditional recruiting firms charge the highest fee they can get away with. We figure out what is the least we can charge to do a quality job and still make a profit. It's almost counterintuitive. You might think low cost means employing inexperienced or offshore recruiters and cutting corners on quality. We do the opposite. We employ only top notch U.S. based recruiters and we have created all sorts of quality assurance tools and steps throughout our process. The entire operation is empowered by a highly advanced technology platform, which is also our own creation.

### **CEOCFO: At a basic level, what are one or two ways in which you use technology? Where you could have technology as part of the process that would surprise people?**

**Mr. Barnett:** Throughout the company, we view our operation like a waffle iron where you have these peaks and valleys. The peaks are our various process steps. Our technology is like waffle batter that pours in and fills in the space between the peaks. We have an internal engineering team, which is very unusual for a recruiting company in general and especially for a company our size. Most recruiting companies purchase third party applicant tracking and other software to automate various tasks and functions. We have created our own applicant tracking, CRM and other technology to enable almost every aspect of what we do, how we manage what we are doing for various clients and how we promote the jobs that we are working on for our clients, how our recruiters manage their day-to-day activities, how recruiters source and evaluate candidates, how they interact with their clients, invoicing, complex compensation models, all sorts of internal reporting, marketing and sales, it's all enabled by technology that we have developed.

### **CEOCFO: Why is that better than what might be available elsewhere?**

**Mr. Barnett:** It lets us be operational contortionists. We have a complex orchestration of processes and people that support every client engagement. Some of our clients use us to fill a position here and a position there. For other clients, we serve as their own recruiting department and fill hundreds of positions yearly. And everything in between. Every client has different needs, a different way that they are structured internally, a different way that they want us to work with them,

and a different way that we charge for our services. On the back side, we have unique compensation and performance measurement models for the various members of our team. Our technology enables us to assemble and manage all of these moving pieces for hundreds of unique client scenarios effortlessly, and ultimately deliver the results the client wants, without our operations and accounting teams going insane trying to keep track of it all.

**CEOCFO: Do you foresee a time when you might license your technology or applications for other industries?**

**Mr. Barnett:** Interestingly, we just last month officially announced that the new version of our recruiting platform, which is called Recruiting Machine, is available for license. One of the unique aspects of Recruiting Machine is the way we have created its own internal user self-training the way we have approached help files and online assistance within the system to help a new user get up to speed really quickly.

**CEOCFO: How are you promoting it or introducing it to people who may want to take advantage?**

**Mr. Barnett:** It goes hand in hand with the services that we provide. When we are talking with new potential clients about how we can help them with their recruiting, it is now another piece of ammunition in our arsenal. There are basically three things that we offer to our clients. One is what is known as RPO – recruitment process outsourcing. This would be for a company that wants to have us take ownership of filling some or all of their open positions. The second service is hourly contract recruiting, where a company would utilize one or more of our recruiters or sourcers to assist them with their internal recruiting, on an hourly basis. Now the third piece is Recruiting Machine, the technology platform that not only supports both of our service offerings, but also gives the client a tool to optimize their own internal recruiting. A client could have any one or combination of those things. And I think your question was also an invitation to say that you can learn more about Recruiting Machine at [recruitingmachine.com](http://recruitingmachine.com).

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**- Jay Barnett**

**CEOCFO: Why was this the time for the company to make the technology available?**

**Mr. Barnett:** We've been evolving Recruiting Machine for over 15 years. During that time we have had hundreds of recruiters use it internally at Decision Toolbox, as well as some clients with whom we have shared the platform. Virtually every recruiter who is exposed to Recruiting Machine tells us that it is the best recruiting system they have ever used. Most people would say that the market is already too saturated with applicant tracking systems, which is the industry term for that kind of a system, an ATS – applicant tracking system. There are an awful lot of them out there, and pretty much all of them do 90 percent of the same things. But we know there are still many small and medium-sized businesses that do not yet have an ATS either because they do not know they need one or they have just been putting it off because it seems like a daunting task trying to choose the right one and then go through the implementation and learning process. Also, our research tells us that a large percentage of companies that have an ATS are not happy with the one they have. We want the recruiters at those companies to have the experience that our own recruiters do. One other factor is that we have something our competitors can't offer, which is that Recruiting Machine comes backed by our nationwide team of senior experienced U.S. based recruiters. If you are using Recruiting Machine to manage your internal recruiting and you decide you need help filling a particular position, with the click of a button one or more members of our team can jump into action, help get that job filled at a very reasonable cost, and then we're out when the assignment is done.

**CEOCFO: What do you understand fundamentally as a company about the whole process of recruiting that perhaps others just do not get quite as well?**

**Mr. Barnett:** One thing is the importance of a structured process if you want consistency. In recruiting, you either design what you want or deal with what you get. Most companies spend way more time dealing with what they get than designing what they want. They have an open position and immediately they want to start reviewing resumes. But by taking a little extra time at the front end to build a recruiting plan, marketing campaign and screening tools, we are able to focus more on attracting the candidates our client wants as opposed to screening out the ones who are not a fit.

Expanding on that a little, every company wants to be an employer of choice so they can attract the top talent that's out there. That's good, but the true top performers don't just want to have a nice onsite cafeteria or a ping pong table. They are comfortably employed and they'll only make a move for a better opportunity, a more appealing challenge. That means what can they learn? What might an accelerated career path look like? What projects will they be involved in? How can they make their mark on the company? But these are the kinds of things we never see in company job descriptions or job postings. Companies aren't willing to invest the time to dig in and really market each open position as a unique opportunity. Typically they just put job descriptions on their careers pages. A job description gives the reader an idea of whether they can do the job, but not why they would want to. When we recruit for an open position, we market the true opportunity.

**CEOCFO: Do many companies, even though they want the best people, really offer that kind of a challenge or opportunity?**

**Mr. Barnett:** There is a saying that we coined, “Every job is the ideal opportunity for someone.” The trick is picturing who that someone is, and presenting the opportunity accordingly. There is always a way to do that.

**CEOCFO: Looking on your site, there is a list of industries. Are there particular areas you like to focus in or where would like to have more traction?**

**Mr. Barnett:** We purposely do not specialize in a particular industry or discipline, the reason being that in recruiting, the cardinal rule is that you do not recruit from your clients. When we are recruiting for a client, we need the talent pool that we can tap into to be as deep as possible. The more we specialize in an industry or discipline, the more we limit the companies that we can recruit from.

**CEOCFO: Would you tell us about the non-profit relief program and why that is important for the company?**

**Mr. Barnett:** Decision Toolbox supports dozens of philanthropic causes. There are so many important non-profits and none of them have enough money to achieve their goals. Decision Toolbox has a program called the Channel Partner program where anyone can earn a generous share of our revenue in exchange for making a warm referral into a company that becomes a client. This has been our best source of new clients – introductions from professional people who trust Decision Toolbox and recommend us to a peer or other associate. Sometimes people feel uncomfortable about accepting money for making that introduction, for whatever reason, a conflict of interest or whatever. In that case rather than us just pocketing the revenue share, we offer to donate those dollars to a non-profit that is a heartfelt one for the person referring us, in his or her name.

**CEOCFO: You talked about the new service and technology you are offering. What else is ahead for the company? What are you working on now?**

**Mr. Barnett:** Prioritization is the biggest challenge. On the technology side, we currently have 810 ideas, requests and concepts in our queue waiting to be addressed. These range from suggestions for minor tweaks to complete new product offerings. Anything that helps a recruiter be more of a super recruiter or helps a candidate have a better experience in the process of looking for work and applying for a job or helps a client have a better experience in working with Decision Toolbox as a partner. For example, right now we are exploring an entirely new concept for a job application portal, and we are beginning development of an automated recruiter assistant system.

**CEOCFO: Put it all together for our readers. Why choose Decision Toolbox?**

**Mr. Barnett:** When you look at the quality and thoroughness of the work we do at the price we charge, it should be a no brainer. Bottom line, we get the job done, at a low cost, and we create a great experience for our clients and their candidates in the process. These are not just words. Our track record, our client survey results and hundreds of testimonial quotes from clients back that up.

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**BIO:** History has shown Jay to be ahead of the curve of what’s next in recruitment strategy and technology.

In 1979, he co-founded and fully computerized an Information Technology search firm – the first truly paperless recruitment company on the West Coast. After several successful years, Barnett’s focus shifted toward developing creative, cost-effective alternatives to traditional search, and in 1989 he introduced a forerunner to web-based recruitment in the form of an online job bank accessible to the public by modem.

Jay launched Decision Toolbox in 1992, where he developed applicant-friendly alternatives to costly search firms and newspaper advertising, in the form of the Virtual Interviewing™ and Double Impact Dissemination strategies. These evolved into the Recruitment Engineering™ methodology and suite of tools (JobinfoWriteup™, Resume Supplement™, Recruiter Pre-Screen Worksheet and Hiring Manager Interview Worksheet). Beginning in 1996, he architected and led the development of Recruiting Machine™, a web-based recruiting management system wrapped around the Recruitment Engineering methodology.

Jay is passionate about quality in recruiting, and he continues to direct that passion toward improving both technology and processes that drive the industry. He holds a BS degree in Marketing from the State University of New York at Albany and resides with his wife in Lake Oswego, OR

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## **Decision Toolbox**

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