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WHITE PAPER

> Demystifying the Immigration Process

Leveraging technology, the immigration process can be efficient and seamless for employers and their foreign applicants, creating a recruitment advantage for organizations.



> Demystifying the Immigration Process to Enhance Recruitment in the Global Environment

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International recruitment has become a necessity rather than an alternative for many companies. As more U.S. Corporations turn their attention abroad for skilled talent, HR professionals are faced with the growing challenge of navigating the confusing and time consuming U.S. immigration process. This critical gateway for hiring foreign workers has never been easy to manage. Now, in the face of increasing applications and evolving legislation, companies are finding it more difficult than ever to get the useful advice and the approvals they need to stay competitive.

Leveraging technology, the immigration process can be efficient and seamless for employers and their foreign applicants, creating a recruitment advantage for organizations. Enhanced offers to international talent, higher retention rates and faster additions to your workforce can be realized and directly translated to a competitive edge when trying to secure top talent. By every measurement, it is easier, faster and less expensive to deliver legal services via a technology-driven model than the traditional billable hours-based law firm model.

Introduction to the Process

The immigration application process can be separated into three key pieces or components:

Preparing applications: Immigration processing is a document-intensive, form-driven procedure. Employers must take the necessary steps to correctly fill out all documents in a timely manner in order to meet regulation requirements and deadlines. Immigration applications contain:

- Forms
- Letters
- Templates

Answers to legal questions: Although the process is highly administrative, it is crucial for employers or individuals preparing immigration petitions to have fast and direct access to legal guidance throughout the process.

- Situations and cases vary, but the majority of legal questions for specific applications review much of the same information.
- When time is of the essence, employers must receive responses to their legal questions within a reasonable timeframe to keep the process moving forward.

Tracking: When it comes to immigration processing, managing dates and documents in a timely manner is a necessity.

- Time sensitive filings, the review and approval of supporting documentation, and the management of cases or different points in the process present a significant challenge to track or locate critical information.



Technology Redefines the Process

All three of these main components can be significantly simplified and expedited through the incorporation of a technology.

Preparing applications: Technology allows for a faster preparation of visa applications as well as easier, more efficient access to information.

- Centralizing the transfer of data and information through collaborative online work centers enable the client, the individual applicant and the attorney to prepare and review documents and case information more readily.
- Information can be made available for client viewing anywhere there is an Internet connection providing foreign applicants with real-time access.
- Individual applicants can interact directly with legal services providers increasing employee satisfaction and freeing up HR departments to focus on more strategic issues.

Answers to legal questions: Legal services providers can communicate with clients and respond to their inquiries much faster via the Internet. Clients no longer have to wait hours, days or even weeks to get answers to their legal questions. Technology enables:

- Faster attorney responses with expedite application preparation and increases client access to information
- Documented questions provide online case histories for clients to review.

Tracking: Technology provides a centralized and transparent forum for tracking the critical documents and deadlines for immigration applications. Online providers service clients with:

- Easier internal caseload management and improved control. The ability to view all information regarding one or multiple matters simultaneously in a single place makes it much easier to track progress or locate critical information.
- Unprecedented reporting functionally. Technology allows for timely metrics on cost of services, performance and other aspects of case management.

Proven Process

During a recent heightened immigration activity period, the technology driven service model had the opportunity to prove its stripes, and it did so with flying colors.

Preparing and filing Form I-485 (Application to Register Permanent Residence or to Adjust Status) is the final step in obtaining permanent resident legal status, commonly referred to as a green card. In mid-June, the Department of State decided to open up the backlog of applicants, which was great news for those who had been waiting for an extended period. As a result of this announcement, there was a rapid and significant influx in application activity for legal service providers.

During this period, providers leveraging technology were able to scale to handle the increased volume of applications. Not only were they able to process these quickly to meet the first day of filing, but they also were able to maintain their responsive communication with individual applicants, keeping them informed of the situation and reducing anxiety levels regarding their cases.

Meanwhile, traditional service providers could not respond to this heightened activity due to the inefficiencies in their outdated process. Employees of corporations utilizing the traditional service model were often left in the dark and forced to find answers on their own, possibly hurting their case as well as their workplace productivity.

Transform Immigration into a Competitive Advantage

Approached strategically, the immigration process can be a significant recruiting tool for an organization. The cost efficiencies provided through a technology-driven process allows for enhanced job offers to international talent. By every measurement, it is less expensive to deliver legal services via a technology-driven model than the traditional billable hours-based law firm model. In addition to a lower overall processing expense, these efficiencies can also present the opportunity for employers to extend green card sponsorships to cover the worker's spouse in the initial offer. Increased employee satisfaction levels resulting from a positive immigration experience lead to higher retention rates in the long run. Most importantly, faster processing reduces the time it takes to have the new hire join your team and expedited their contribution to your workforce.

The skilled labor shortage in the U.S. is forcing companies to turn to foreign markets to source the talent they need to remain competitive in the global economy. By leveraging technology to expedite the visa application process, employers move a step ahead in the battle to attract and retain the top talent for their organization. For more information, please visit VISA-NOW.



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