

August 10.....

Inside Outsourcing™



INTERVIEWED BY LARRY JANIS

Inside with:

Dawn Evans, President and CEO, Sourcing Interests Group

Sourcing Interests Group (SIG) is a membership-driven organization comprised of sourcing and outsourcing professionals. Members are focused on improving bottom-line performance, quality and customer service through strategic sourcing/procurement and outsourcing initiatives. SIG is acknowledged by many as a world leader in providing an ongoing forum and services to assist companies in strategy development, the improvement of goods and services sourcing, and the implementation and management of corporate services through outsourcing, offshoring, insourcing and shared services.



LJ: *You have been running Sourcing Interests Group for a couple of years now, what changes have you seen in the marketplace?*

DE: I took the reins at Sourcing Interests Group (SIG) about a year before the bottom fell out of the market, so it goes without saying that we have seen radical shifts in just about everything. Companies have tightened their belts, evaluated their processes and made transformative changes in their organizations. They are looking strategically at all their business processes and determining whether it makes sense to keep them in-house or outsource them. And perhaps most importantly, CPOs have finally gained the credibility they have always deserved in the Board room.

From a strategic sourcing perspective, we've seen companies putting more spend under management and seen them explore new sources for supply, both on and off-shore. More companies than ever seem to be looking at technologies and methodologies to help them in their decision-making (make vs. buy vs. out-source). And categories that have long been considered "sacred cows," like marketing and legal, are no longer safe from being sourced. From an outsourcing perspective, we have seen momentum building towards the outsourcing of transactional procurement, where companies clearly believe there are significant savings to be had.

(continues on next page)

FROM THE EDITOR

.....

Inside Outsourcing's goal is to provide you with articles of interest and with a forum for the exchange of information in this rapidly evolving industry.

Inside with:

Dawn Evans, President and CEO, Sourcing Interests Group

.....



All that being said, since the end of 2009, we have started to see real optimism in the state of the economy, both in the way our member companies are performing and our membership itself. More and more companies are coming to SIG as a forum for meeting and networking with their peers in other organizations to find out how they have addressed the challenges that have occurred as a result of the economy. Our membership is on a growth curve, which is indicative of an uptick in the economy.

LJ: How have you adjusted or modified the SIG conferences to reflect those changes?

DE: The economy has given us a real opportunity to reflect on how we can make the SIG Summits, Regional Roundtables and SIG Webinar Series more rich and meaningful for our members and potential members. For our Summits in particular, in addition to making sure we have great speakers that share best practices, like Tim McBride, CPO of Microsoft and Randy Lewis, SVP of Supply Chain and Logistics from Walgreens, we have also added a few big programs that will add immense value to both Summits.

This fall for the first time ever, we will be hosting four consecutive executive roundtables—one each for CPOs, CFOs, CIOs and BPO Leads. By invitation-only, we are bringing together these business leaders who have responsibility for radically different functions and asking them to share with one another how they have dealt with the economic downturn and revival. In these concurrent sessions, we will facilitate discussions on the issues they are facing and ways to address them. And at the end of the day, they will convene as a group of C-level executives and talk about the challenges each function faces, the common goals they share within their organizations and the different ways these groups that sometimes have competing interests, can and should be working together. The results of the roundtables will be presented to the Summit delegates so we can get a cross-functional perspective. We expect these roundtables to be enormously successful and plan to incorporate them into our Leadership Summit each fall.

At our spring Global Sourcing Summit, we will be partnering with the Outsourcing Center (OC) to provide the Outsourcing and Sourcing Excellence Awards. Before we partnered with OC, the awards were thought of as the “Oscars of Outsourcing” and although they highlighted many different outsourcing categories, they didn’t recognize sourcing/procurement categories at all. As a result of our partnership, a whole new category of awards will be offered, recognizing best practices in sourcing as well as outsourcing. For many years, the awards were presented at the SIG Summits, but because they addressed only a subset of our membership, they eventually moved the awards program to a different location. We are excited to be bringing the awards back to the SIG Global Sourcing Summit where we can now proudly recognize the interests of all of our members.

“companies are coming to SIG as a forum for meeting and networking with their peers in other organizations to find out how they have addressed the challenges that have occurred as a result of the economy.”



Inside with:

Dawn Evans, President and CEO, Sourcing Interests Group

.....



LJ: You speak with many buyers of outsourcing services, are their expectations of an outsourcing deal changing?

DE: I'm not sure I would say that the expectations with regards to the outsourcing deals themselves are changing as much as the expectations with regards to the service they are receiving. Buyers want to make sure they are getting everything they possibly can out of each deal from their service providers. They don't want to pay more than they have to and they are holding the providers to a more rigorous level of scrutiny in what they are delivering and whether they are doing it within the parameters of the agreement.

Due to the economy we have seen much more rigor with regard to governance and risk management. We are also seeing a strong emergence of BPO in areas that were previously not very popular. To serve the emerging BPO areas we are seeing some new niche providers coming into the marketplace to serve these areas. Companies like Denali Sourcing Services are emerging for Procurement Outsourcing and a multitude of law firms are looking at offering LPO services.

LJ: You have an interesting blend of sponsors such as Alsbridge, Ariba and AT Kearney, what insights do they provide and what insights do they gain from being a part of SIG?

DE: First let me make a few distinctions. Alsbridge, Ariba and A.T. Kearney are sponsors of SIG events, but more importantly they are members, which gives them the opportunity to sponsor. At the most basic level, we have two types of members—corporate user members (or buy-side members) and provider members (or sell-side members). The three companies you referenced are actually provider members. Needless to say they benefit from being part of SIG because it gives them access to senior level executives from buy-side Global 1000 companies. One of the key differentiators of SIG events and in essence SIG itself is that we offer thought leadership in a trusted, non-commercial environment. What that means is that our corporate user members can attend SIG events with the assurance that our provider members will not try to sell them their products or services, but rather, will showcase their thought leadership and best practices...and we believe, and have proven time and again, that by doing so they will actually do a better job of selling themselves.

The provider members you mentioned above are all leaders in their respective spaces. Being a part of SIG gives them the chance to share their knowledge and best practices with senior executives from companies where they may not otherwise have contacts. And by doing it within the confines of a SIG Summit or Regional Roundtable, they can allow the relationships to develop naturally.

“ our provider members will not try to sell them their products or services, but rather, will showcase their thought leadership and best practices...”



Inside with:

Dawn Evans, President and CEO, Sourcing Interests Group



.....
LJ: What makes both you as an individual and SIG as an organization successful?

DE: Interestingly, I read an article in Inc. magazine recently that I think really summarizes what has made me successful as an entrepreneur and SIG successful as an organization. The article was called “The Six Traits of a Successful Small Business Owner” and is based on a research study by the Guardian Life Small Business Research Institute. As I read through it, I couldn’t help but reflect on how it so accurately highlighted some of the things I think are critical not only for entrepreneurs, but also for executives of large companies.

According to the research, the most important trait successful entrepreneurs share is the **ability to collaborate**, not only with suppliers, but also with their management teams, staffs and customers. Developing strong relationships is critical in all aspects of life—both professional and personal and collaboration/cooperation is a key component. The other things the article highlighted, while not rocket science are definitely so true for me...specifically, being: **self-fulfilled** by doing what I love and loving what I do; **focused on the future**, always thinking ahead on how I (and we at SIG) can be one step ahead; **innately curious**, reading everything I can that is relevant to successfully managing my business and understanding my member organizations’ concerns; **tech-savvy** and figuring out ways to utilize technology to drive success (I think this is especially important with our younger members who use social media in ways that are still a little foreign to some of us); and **action-oriented**, not only coming up with great ideas but executing on them.

Some members of my management team call my husband and me “serial entrepreneurs”. Together we have launched a number of different types of companies, so you can bet that the article in Inc. resonated with me. (By the way, if you come to the Tahoe area, you really need to check out our latest venture into gourmet coffee and dining at Elijah Bleu’s House of Coffee and Good Eats.)

Integrated Search Solutions Group

We are a retainer based executive search firm with over a decade of experience in successfully attracting top talent in the areas of Outsourcing (IT, BPO and BPM), Consulting (Strategy & Technology) and traditional corporate functions (CIO, CTO, CFO, etc). We have worked effectively with major corporations as well as venture capitalized start-ups. Executive recruiters typically pride themselves in their ability to recruit top executives, irrespective of the industry. Leaders tell us a different story; they value what we do because we understand their business.

OFFICE LOCATIONS: New York - New Jersey - Florida - London

CONTACT US:

Phone: 516-767-3030

Email: janis@issg.net

Web: www.issg.net

Members of: HROA, SBPOA