



RobLawMax Recruitment Expansion into Australia

One of New Zealand's longest standing & most highly regarded recruitment agencies has recently opened the doors to their Australian business. Here we look at the motivations behind this move and also consider the differentiators that company directors see being of mutual benefit to the business and to the wider Australian industry.

Compliment existing business

Managing Director, Pat Quin states "people ask me why we'd want to expand into Australia given how busy it is in New Zealand at the moment, and the answer is simple. We want to optimise our current success and we see our investment in Australia as an appropriate way to achieve this. A high proportion of our client base have an operation in Australia, and we've also attracted a high number of Australian candidates over the last couple of years. They'll want to go home at some stage, so we'd prefer to be the ones that facilitate that return"

This philosophy has been well and truly endorsed by clients on both sides of the Tasman, and as Auckland Manager and Business Partner, Hamish McLean, states "we never had any doubt that this would be an appropriate move, the key catalyst was ensuring that we had the right person to lead this development". This person has been identified as Jeremy Innes who has previously worked with one of the directors.

Roblawmax has already seen the benefits of this expansion with new leads being generated in New Zealand by virtue of the Australian presence, while some previous customer relationships have been reinvigorated by this move.



So, what does Roblawmax offer to the Australian engineering and construction sector?

General Manager, Alan Sherlock, explains **“we have invested heavily to ensure that our consultants are armed with a management system that optimises candidate networks”**.

On its own that doesn't sound like a much of difference does it? “Not necessarily, but **we've developed our own system that reflects the way we want to do business**. For fear of generalising here, I think there's sizeable population of recruiters who don't really understand how to add proper value to their clients. We're constantly having social media fads and job board tools rammed down our throats, and many of our competitors go to extraordinary lengths to promote a range of bolt on services. Our research clearly demonstrates that our client's needs haven't really changed. Our clients have access to many of the tools mentioned above- they want us to find people that they don't know, or can't find. **Nothing has changed, its not rocket science, we simply aim to support them with appropriately qualified talent that we have within our immediate reach”**. We can still provide psychometric testing, tailored marketing campaigns through search optimisation and social media platforms, but we do this in partnership when the need is agreed via consultation”.

So, this sounds good for an established business in New Zealand but what about Australia? “We knew we had a pretty good network of candidates from Australia because we've placed quite a few here over the years, but we didn't actually know quite how good this network was. Jeremy has quickly identified an abundance of talent who have seemingly relocated, or applied, for jobs in New Zealand, especially around the 2012-2015 timeframe. Some never actually moved to New Zealand, others did, and at some stage they'll probably want to return to their origins”.

Legislative framework

Roblawmax is a full member of the RCSA and has sought guidance to ensure that all legal ramifications are considered. “We didn't want to crash into Australia like a bull in a China shop and leave ourselves and our clients exposed” says Pat. **“Australia is not completely foreign to us**. We've studied Australian standards regarding Health & Safety and have adopted an internal system which reflects these standards. New Zealand is not quite as regulated as Australia, but we have taken the opportunity to be the leaders in our field regarding HSE compliance. **I would be surprised if anyone can match our ability to induct, train, and manage site**



compliance in New Zealand, especially off the technology platform that we have created. Our clients here are rapt as we can mitigate risks as a partnership. So, our understanding of local laws and obligations is pretty thorough, and from what I understand our HSE systems would match some of the best agencies operating in Australia”.

Views on the market

“If I am completely honest”, states Pat, “we did have some discussions about the optimal timing of our entry into Australia. The talent transfer had finally been reversed and it wasn’t hard to find media coverage that reflected the challenges being faced within the Australian resources sector. Jeremy put our minds at ease with reference to the growing buoyancy of the transportation sector across the eastern seaboard”. In essence this actually reinforced the business decision as it served to remind of the benefits of trading in Australia. “The population is huge, and the abundance of natural resources will ensure that the opportunities across the built environment remain attractive. **Jeremy has demonstrated the ability to foresee and exploit opportunities across Mining and Oil & Gas development phases over the last few years**, so we’ll be looking to him to drive this diversification in the future”.

So for the timebeing, what will the primary focus be for the Australian business? “We’ve already secured some great opportunities within the Queensland, New South Wales, and Victorian transport infrastructure sectors so don’t want to stretch ourselves too thin by diversifying far from this”, says Jeremy. “We’ll be looking to grow the business sustainably so further sector expansion will certainly be on the radar in the future”.

Further information

For further information on how Roblawmax can support your business please feel free to make contact via the following contacts.

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