

Technology Leadership

CASE STUDY

Scenario

TechNet is a national network of senior executives of leading technology companies. Founded in 1997 by the powerful triumvirate — Jim Barksdale, founder of Netscape; John Doerr, one of Silicon Valley's most influential venture capitalists; and John Chambers, CEO of Cisco — TechNet is comprised of more than 300 chief executive officers and senior partners of companies in the fields of information technology, biotechnology, venture capital, investment banking and law. The company's aim is to build bipartisan support for policies that strengthen America's leadership of the New Economy by meeting with government and political leaders, aggressive advocacy of pro-New Economy public policies and financial support of political candidates. The company was at a critical juncture, needing to hire a new CEO to lead their charge, and selected Spencer Stuart to help meet this challenge.

Critical Challenges

Based on TechNet's diverse constituency — a network of senior executives and engineers from leading technology companies and lawmakers — the challenges to fill the role of CEO were significant. The search effort was especially unique in that, Spencer Stuart — selected from among a field of three other competing firms — was attempting to fill a very particular kind of role: one that required an executive with political savvy, great business instincts and technology experience, as well as a proven record building relationships and teams.

Spencer Stuart

The Solution

Mr. Rick White, former U.S. Congressman in the House of Representatives, was selected as the new bipartisan voice for TechNet. A very decisive and strategic thinker, Rick offers the ability to bring technology to the common man. Recognized as the House of Representative's "tech guru," White is also well-known on Capitol Hill as a founder of the Bipartisan Internet Caucus and an authority on technology issues in the Commerce Committee. He helped craft the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Internet tax moratorium legislation and securities litigation reforms.

Shortly after White's start, former Netscape CEO Jim Barksdale said: "In Rick White we found a perfect combination — a technology leader and an experienced lawmaker." Venture capitalist John Doerr said: "He was one of the first on Capitol Hill to understand the importance of the New Economy. In Congress, he worked closely with Republicans and Democrats to support policies that minimize government regulation and foster innovation."

Rick White recently commented on TechNet's 2001 agenda, which focuses on better education, updating FASB standards, and serving as a technology advisor to Washington, D.C. as policy around Broadband/DSL/ Fiber Optics and other global communication standards are set.

"TechNet is working closely with our members on public and government affairs issues, helping to bridge the gap between Republicans and Democrats, as well as providing an example for a new type of lobbying/PAC model," said Rick White.

White also remarked on his satisfaction with the job and what a great experience he had working with Spencer Stuart in securing the opportunity. "This role really fits my background to a tee. And, throughout the entire process, the firm had both TechNet's and my interest at heart. In fact, even after the search ended, there was still strong interest shown in seeing that I succeeded."

About Spencer Stuart

Founded in 1956, Spencer Stuart is the world's leading privately held executive search firm, offering a range of human capital solutions, including senior-level executive search, board director appointments, strategic leadership assessment and, through its web-based recruiting division – Spencer Stuart Talent Network (SSTN) – mid-level executive recruitment. With over 50 offices in 24 countries, more than 300 consultants and 1,200 staff, Spencer Stuart conducts 4,500 searches annually through a global network of industry and functional practices. Clients range from Fortune 500 companies to smaller, emerging firms.

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