

**Adgully Exclusive – 19.05.2011**  
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**Jyorden T. Misra, MD, Spearhead InterSearch on changing concept of Search**



Spearhead InterSearch, founded in 1997, is a specialized Executive Search Consulting Firm. This company focuses on senior executive and Board level hiring across different verticals in private and public sector. The service offering of high standards of executive search consulting was distinctly based on solid pillars of professionalism, ethics and knowledge backed commitments. The company aims at consistently providing services to a wide but discerning spectrum of clients comprising of Corporations, Entrepreneurial Ventures, Social Sector Organizations, PE/VC Firms and Public Institutions.

Talking exclusively to Adgully, Jyorden T. Misra, Managing Director, Spearhead InterSearch discusses and highlights the features of his company elaborately.

Misra said, "As the Indian economy drew closer to the global paradigm, Spearhead's integration with InterSearch, a worldwide organization, with the largest network of Search Firms in the world, gave it a huge fillip, by providing access to a platform of diverse global corporations looking at entering India or expanding their operations here. The association has been mutually rewarding as InterSearch's clients get assured of a premium service its client's are used to in the international markets, in India too."

Having worked with Colgate Palmolive, Bata, Honda, Raymond, ISMT, Stryker, Orange, Kempii, Analog Devices, he further added, "The second highlight is the access to global best practices, specialized domain knowledge across sectors and cross-border search engagements which deeply enrich the capability, competency and quality of the India enterprise located in 5 major cities across the country. The organization's motto of "Think global, Act local" captures the aforesaid elements very holistically."

Talking about challenges, Misra said, "In India the challenge is mainly to educate the market and the client on the value add which a true executive search process can

bring. It is still a relatively new concept in the country with partial understanding of its total efficacy and impact."

He further added, "With the advent of the so called new MNCs in the late 90's, did the executive search market start growing perceptibly. Now national local companies are also actively opening up to the idea of paying a premium for a research based consulting service in this area. Developing true domain knowledge and not merely a loose network in the domain is a key challenge. This means that executive search firm has to demonstrate evolved expertise and creative solutions to retain clients, often with a bouquet of services which go beyond conventional purview."

"Maintaining a price point (service fee) which is consistent is another challenge. With the onslaught of price agnostic contingent firms, coupled with the rapid proliferation of technology which in turn brings the world and its data closer, Search Firms with shallow foundations develop cracks a lot quicker. Economic down-swings too add to destabilizing firms with weaker foundations," he explained.

In such a competitive environment, what makes InterSearch stand out? "InterSearch is a combination of executive search firms working together under a global brand. This gives the company a lot of flexibility in times of market turmoil, as it possesses great agility to adapt to changing or emerging market scenarios. The company has a very wide geographical reach, with offices in more than 40 countries and 100 cities. This makes it one of the largest companies in terms of number of offices, with a unique capability to hire in more than 30 languages across continents. The company also prides itself on its research capabilities," stated Misra.

In a scenario where the concept of search has evolved many folds over in the last few years, it is interesting to know how the company keeps up with current times. "The concept of search has indeed matured in the last 5 years. With more global corporations coming into the country from advanced markets they are paving the way for greater market awareness on the virtues and contributive values of executive search. More international executive search companies have come in to India and created healthy competition which has automatically improved quality and service standards across the board," Misra said.

"In fact the importance of true executive search has increased with the development of technology. Technology is a 'means to an end' and 'not the end in itself'. Firms reliant on just quick-fix, technology enabled data generation activities will service clients with a certain band of talent requirements. Typically, these are volume led, lower end needs. What technology cannot replace is the human factor, its intelligence, intuition and judgement. Thus 'well-rounded' search firms will always have best of both, technology and humanolog," Misra further explained.

In terms of marketing strategies, it covers two dimensions. The first ones are Brand promotion and Concept evangelization. There are regular updates on the website, press releases globally, a dedicated PR team to take care of global requirements. And the other dimension is Business Development & Client Acquisition/Retention initiatives. This is largely driven through Practice Groups for each industry or set of industries that are organized at national, regional and global levels.

Misra believes the future of this space is very bright. "Executive Search in India is evolving rapidly and getting segmented, as is the case in more mature markets worldwide. As clients get more demanding, knowledgeable and involved, margin for error will shrink and slipshod delivery will have no place. The war for talent is eternal and in countries such as India where emphasis on 'skilling' is gaining stronger momentum, demand for better quality and more competent talent will only grow," he said.

"As long as this demand and this war exist, the frontline commanders manning the search firms will have their hands full! Key to success, if not survival will be innovation to stay abreast of the fast paced and dynamic trends and continuous up gradation of high quality research tools and knowledge banks. The conventional duo of relationship management and consultative solutioning will of course remain evergreen!" Misra exclaimed.