

Interim CFO Identifies Obstacles Hindering Business Carve Out and Facilitates Smooth Transition for Incoming CFO

Optimized key accounting functions for more effective cash management and strengthened finance's relationship with other parts of the business for greater cross-organizational coordination

Our Challenge

A financial software company, with an in-demand product created by carving out a new niche from two larger firms by its PE investors, faced high staff turnover in the finance organization while still relying on disparate processes and systems leftover from its legacy entities. When its CFO resigned, the PE investor and CEO turned to Focus Search Partners to place an interim CFO with significant financial leadership experience, including a track record of fixing broken infrastructure and scaling private and public tech companies for rapid growth. The CEO's objectives for the interim CFO were clear but extensive: identify a suggested path forward for the business, manage and improve the finance function, and onboard the incoming CFO through an overlapping transition period.

Our Solution

Using his extensive experience at leading finance and driving strategy at various public and private software companies, our interim CFO immediately began developing a holistic view of the business by meeting with each member of the executive leadership team. Through this dialogue, he identified what they needed from finance to improve the overall performance of the business and quickly closed those reporting gaps.

He also met individually with all finance team members to assess their skills, identify their concerns, and improve their processes and systems so that they could operate more effectively and be more responsive to the executive leadership team and board. From there, he identified the business' critical priorities, tackled some of the most urgent concerns, and created a roadmap for the incoming CFO to use to take the business into the future.

Our Outcome

Focus Search Partners' Interim CFO possessed the technical knowledge to quickly uncover dysfunctional processes that were hindering cash management, reporting, and budgeting, and he had the communication skills to foster stronger relationships within the finance team and between it and the rest of the business. With this crucial groundwork in place, he onboarded the incoming CFO over a one-month period, smoothing the transition and setting him and the business up to handle the pent-up demand for its SaaS platform.

- Addressed aging invoices with refined AR process
- Optimized AP process to ensure business continuity
- Assessed systems and identified areas for improvement
- Installed better cash tracking process and reporting
- Initiated next fiscal year planning and budget cycle
- Helped proactively prepare for year-end audit
- Improved month-end close and reporting
- Redesigned board package focusing its attention on the most important issues for review and approval
- Identified single points of failure within finance org structure to be addressed by incoming CFO

Key Results

Processes: Improved all primary finance functions

Systems: Identified next steps for enhancement

People: Unified staff toward common goal and suggested a refined finance org structure

"I asked Focus Search Partners' Interim CFO to run the business as if he owned it, and he did. By fixing some of our most pressing issues, he gave the new CFO critical breathing room, along with a detailed roadmap for additional improvements to consider. Even now, the interim CFO thankfully continues to offer advice as the new CFO digs into the job." - Chief Executive Officer