



Adam Scriber, Eugene Lupario and Steve Allen on a trip to Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.

SVSG

USES BASICS FOR SUCCESS

In 1996 Eugene Lupario and Steve Allen left careers in the winery business to venture into the staffing industry. The duo – who had worked together at Gallo Winery in Sonoma, CA – launched Emeryville CA-Based Silicon Valley Staffing Group with Lupario’s cousin, Quentin Olwell, who had previous staffing experience.

“The three of us saw the tremendous employment and economic growth that was taking place in the valley and decided to capitalize on it,” explains Lupario in an e-mail. “It was our goal to help people and companies find one another. Additionally, we saw the marketplace changing from an employment standpoint and the need for a ‘moveable workforce’ was growing. Our goal was to be able to provide legions of people to meet high-volume projects.”

When SVSG first opened in September 1996, it focused entirely on providing telecommunications companies with technicians, to help meet the growing need of the many startups and venture capital-based companies that were sprouting up.

“At the time, from 1996 to 2000, companies throughout the Silicon Valley were adding people faster than the IT professionals could hook up their computers and phones,” says Lupario. “Our company was helping those startups install their networks and IT backbones.”

Today, SVSG provides staffing not only for the telecommunications industry, but also for the financial, administrative, light industrial and mortgage industries as well. Seventy-five percent of the company’s revenue comes from the information technology, office clerical and light industrial sectors, while the remaining 25% comes from the mortgage sector, according to Allen.

SVSG, which generated \$11 million in 2006 and plans to hit \$12.5 million this year, has a total of three offices in California (the other two are in Sacramento and San Jose) as well as offices in Phoenix and Chicago.

The plan is to open one or two more offices this year, but “much of that will be dependent up our ability to attract the right people to our company,” according to Lupario.

It’s been rewarding watching the company grow; taking it from a concept to a multi-million dollar business, says Allen. Now, the challenge is to grow the company in the right way, to make sure that as the company grows, its customer service level doesn’t drop. “Our business is all about people and relationships,” says Lupario. Other challenges SVSG faces are dealing with worker-related issues that come up and with the ebbs and flows of the market, says Allen. “We go up and down quite a bit depending on the economy.”

One thing that’s unique about SVSG is that the staff has held jobs in the areas they are staffing. The company puts more than 400 people to work each day. “The greatest reward in running this business is knowing that we are putting good people to work,” explains Lupario. “There is a tremendous amount of pleasure that I believe all of us enjoy in helping folks discover new careers and opportunities. Over the years we have worked with many people, and it really is a great feeling to help them out.”

SVSG’s slogan – “Bringing the Best Together” – is seen in all of the company’s marketing material and is something the company truly believes in, according to Lupario. The idea is to pair top-notch people with top-notch companies. The Silicon Valley Business Journal and the San Francisco Times have both named SVSG one



Silicon Valley Staffing Group

Industries Served: Telecommunications, Financial, administrative, light industrial and mortgage

Web Site: www.svts.com

Revenue: \$11 million in 2006

the Bay Area's fast-growing companies. Back in 2000, SVSG also ranked 17th on the Inc. 500 list of fastest-growing privately held companies.

What's the company's secret to success? "We are fair and honest," explains Lupario. "We have always looked at our business as having two clients: the candidates we place and the company we place them with. Each one is, and should be, treated with fairness, honesty and integrity."

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Satisfied Clients

The San Jose office of Communication Products Inc. (CPI), which provides connectivity, telephony and information technology services, has hired technicians from SVSG. "They're not worried about just putting a body there," says Tracy Blackwell, CPI's West Coast division operations manager. "That's what made them stand out for me. As long as they can keep finding people, I'll keep taking them." CPI has been so impressed with several of the workers it has gotten from SVSG that it has hired them full-time, points out Blackwell.

Candidates Also Happy

SVSG helped Elayne Schwartz land a full-time position as a regional manager for WMC Mortgage. "Instead of just placing a person in an open position, they try to match the experience, personality and career path with the individual," says Schwartz. "[They're] really doing a combination of filling positions and mentoring, counseling people into positions they'll be happy with. They're looking for long-term goals as opposed to quick fixes."



Eugene Lupario and Steve Allen wearing jackets to keep themselves warm on a trip to London.

Overseas Trips Provide Opportunity to Plan for the Future

Once a year Lupario, Allen and SVSG's corporate controller Adam Scribner, who works out of Chicago, venture on an overseas trip together, to do planning and set strategy for the following year.

This year, the trio plan to go to Barcelona. Over the years, they've also gone to Costa Rica, Rio de Janeiro, London and Amsterdam. "These trips give us a great deal of time together and allow us to talk, create and plan strategy for the upcoming year," explains Lupario. "This obviously goes a long way in terms of team-building. Unlike many executives I know who tend to dread the challenges of planning and forecasting for the upcoming year, we balance work with fun, and we all very much look forward to our annual pilgrimage."

Different Duties

Lupario spends his time working with branch managers, account executives and recruiters. He also interfaces with clients and looks at new opportunities for the company. Allen, on the other hand, handles the finance and operations side of the business. Operational issues include everything from safety training to dealing with worker's compensation issues. Both Lupario and Allen handle strategic planning, establish company policies and set objectives.

In their free time, both Lupario and Allen enjoy coaching their kids' baseball teams. "It's great," says Lupario, who sits on the board of directors of the Twin cities Little League in Marin County. "It's so fun. It's one of the most rewarding things I've done. I've been doing it seven years and been on the board four years now. You get out of it what you put into it. "Much like a successful staffing firms."

