

# Case Study: How Vonage Uses Priori for Cost Savings, Local Counsel & More

## THE CHALLENGE

Vonage is a global cloud communications company that helps businesses accelerate their digital transformation. They turned to Priori Marketplace to find flexible resources for various types of legal work, including local counsel and overflow support, and to drive cost savings overall.

Carol Hopperton, Legal Chief of Staff at Vonage, joined the company in 2019 to set up Legal Operations and brought her background in working for fast-growing technology companies to the agile legal team at Vonage. One of her most important goals in taking over the role four years ago was scaling the sales-supporting legal function at the company.

"You're in kind of a quandary in legal because everything that sales needs, they want it now," she explains. "And there's this general expectation that you'll take whatever volume comes in and be able to support it now. So for us, it's really about trying to map our legal resources onto the business." Hopperton's background with technology companies informed her perspective on legal resourcing. "I'm always trying to understand where we're spending our dollars, how we're spending them and how to spend them most effectively by embracing better processes, better



technology and better legal services. I try to run legal like it's my business."

Hopperton succinctly summarizes the challenge she runs into: "How do we right size the team? How do we put together a really agile, dynamic team that can flex and be able to support peaks without adding to your team size?"

When she received a recommendation to check out Priori, it provided an intriguing opportunity to answer these questions.

"I was looking for an additional flexible contract resource to supplement our team," she says. "I also wanted to figure out how we could start to embrace contract managers so that we were using our seasoned attorneys to do the really complex, high value work rather than churn out NDAs, for



example. I wanted to embrace people who were enthusiastic about working with technology solutions in their every day provision of legal services and different ways of working because you want to make sure they're going to thrive in your environment. Essentially, I was looking to fill some gaps and really enhance our support and coverage in terms of location and volume so that we could take a breath—the volume was so high that the team was constantly chasing their tails.”

## THE SOLUTION

After receiving a recommendation from a colleague in her network, Hopperton decided to give Priori a try and immediately found the platform offered her a way to quickly find high quality attorneys who could seamlessly supplement her legal team and reduce their workload.

“We got a project up and within 24 to 48 hours what came back was what I consider

to be a perfect number of quality candidates,” she says. “Very quickly I’m able to interact with them and have a conversation. Then I’ll put one or two through to our attorney responsible for the particular business line or activity and that’s the process. Within a really short time we’re able to onboard these folks and I felt like I was able to be really close to the process.”

She also notes that the lawyers on Priori’s vetted network understand how to work well with businesses, making the onboarding process smooth. “The main piece about finding people is whether they have the right culture fit and mindset to really thrive and become a part of your team. It’s just as important as doing the job. Even though they’re not a full-time employee, you want them to be seen as a core member of the team. What’s been really interesting is—the only way I can say it is that with Priori we’ve found just

great people.”

Reflecting on why she has come back to Priori for multiple engagements, Hopperton explains, “Sometimes I stop and think, ‘Why do I use this?’ I use this because it’s easy. I’m not saying the other processes are wrong. I know some of the other options can provide a good service, but there is something about everything being online and at my fingertips that I just feel much more in control. I can have a very quick and direct relationship with the candidates and the technology is there to support it. It’s easy. It’s fast. It just works.”

## THE RESULT

Hopperton’s experience with Priori has led to multiple current engagements started through the platform, including local counsel on the West Coast, an attorney focused on bespoke telecoms service agreement work and an attorney providing overflow support on an interim basis. Depending on what’s needed for a given project, Hopperton may use an attorney for a certain number of hours a week or month, or on a more full-time schedule for a defined period.

As Legal Chief of Staff, one of Hopperton’s top priorities is cost savings. “I always have one eye on the budget and one eye on what we’re trying to do with that budget,” she says. “Like most companies, we’re trying to do more with less. That’s why I embrace new methods and I have very much stepped away from the idea that you need

purely seasoned attorneys to do more of the same—you know, every time your volume goes up you just hire another attorney. For me it’s about having a blended legal support team which enables us to focus the right team resource on the most appropriate activities—it makes the team more efficient and provides cost savings.”

Priori helps Hopperton reduce costs in this way. “It’s about finding people with the right level of experience that we need, but not having to employ them and then as a team making sure we utilize them,” she explains. “It gives us great access. And instead of bringing an employee in, where you have

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- Carol Hopperton, Legal Chief of Staff at Vonage

the additional headcount costs and everything that goes with it, you also achieve close to 100% productivity. With Priori I feel like I'm benefitting from 100% of whatever hours we are buying and we are buying them at a competitive rate."

Hopperton sums up her experience with Priori: "It has given me an easy, fast way into a solution, so now it's my go-to place." She also points to how in addition to making

things easy, the efficiency of the platform compounds her cost savings goals. "Time equals money, so every hour or half hour that one of our team members or myself are assessing resources, whether it's interviewing or on a call, that's money—we can't be doing other work. It comes back to those same things, which are the quality of candidates, the speed and the ease of bringing them in and to me that makes it efficient. And efficiency is cost savings."



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