CUSTOMER STORY

webflow

Webflow's Engineering Leadership Makes Recruiting a Team Sport with Gem

Webflow is the leading no-code visual development platform for teams of all sizes to design, build and launch powerful websites and online experiences. The company raised a $140 million Series B funding round in 2021, after a year in which it doubled its customer base (its customers include giants like Dell and PwC) and launched an enterprise product with features such as advanced DDoS protection and single sign-on support.

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>
> **Arquay Harris**
> VP of Engineering

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Company Overview:

- San Francisco, CA
- No-code website development and hosting platform
- 400+ employees
- Webflow.com
- ATS: Greenhouse

Pain points / Challenges:

While it's in high-growth mode, Webflow doesn't yet have a dedicated sourcing team. Recruiters do their own sourcing and field a high volume of inbound, which poses a challenge as the team looks ahead to hiring goals for this year. The eng team's strategy is to have managers augment sourcing work where they can; but the team needed a solution that would serve as a site of collaboration and a single source of truth for those efforts.

Results with Gem:

- Eng managers can go into Gem, source talent, and send their own sequences
- The team has visibility into *all* communications with talent, preventing multiple reachouts, improving candidate experience—and ultimately, candidate quality
- Recruiters can send on behalf of their VP of Eng, increasing response rates for high-level roles
- With a source of truth for outreach stats, the team can unearth best messaging practices
- Leadership can easily access both high-level and granular data: How is eng recruiting going, broadly speaking? Who's in process, and in what stages, for a given role?

Much of that funding has been used to double-down on product development—which naturally means hiring more engineers, VP of Engineering Arquay Harris notes. "We're looking to double engineering this year. It's one of the great ironies of this space," she adds. "Webflow is supporting the non-technical user trend by allowing folks to build sites without code. But *we* need folks who code to build the platform *itself*—and developers are scarcer than ever. Which means engineering *has* to collaborate with recruiting if we're going to continue to build a world-class team."

"One aspect of my job is to increase operational efficiency": Onboarding Engineering Managers to Gem

When it comes to eng recruiting, "*my* job is to increase operational efficiency and reduce mean time-to-hire," Arquay says. "It's really that simple. But it's a complex equation, and there were a lot of things I had to implement to do so. One of those things involved expanding the team's use of Gem." Webflow had adopted Gem prior to Arquay's arrival in part because "we don't yet have sourcing as a dedicated function," she explains. "We're a smaller company, though we're in high-growth. As a natural iteration of things, we'll have that function soon. But for *now*, our recruiters deal with a high volume of inbound,

which poses a challenge as we look ahead to hiring goals this year. And they rely heavily on sourcing to fill those gaps. So when I joined, I emphasized the need for hiring managers to augment the sourcing work." What this looks like in practice is Webflow uses its recruiting allocation to focus on specialized and leadership roles; recruiting and engineering double-down on their partnership when it comes to everything else. Gem is a site of collaboration for that partnership—*and* a source of truth.

Arquay was familiar with Gem from her previous role as Senior Director of Engineering at Slack; and she asked her lead, "who was very well-versed in Gem, to do a training for my managers. I saw what the benefits would be if the team learned to take advantage of it. So at any point, an eng manager with an open req can go into Gem, source their own candidates, and send their own pre-built sequences. A lot of managers have gotten very sophisticated with their sequences over time," Arquay says; "and we've seen a great deal of success from those efforts."

Gem's Impact on Candidate Quality

One of the metrics that Gem has most impacted, Arquay says, "is the quality of the candidates we're seeing. One of Gem's most valuable features at the top of the funnel is the Chrome extension," she explains. "Because when I visit an engineer's profile, I can see, Oh, Anna has already emailed this person. It eliminates the multiple-reachout problem, which is such bad form and makes for such a negative candidate experience. Sometimes I'll get a referral and I'll go into Gem and see that person is already in the pipeline; we just emailed them last week. That visibility *alone* increases candidate quality—terrific talent isn't opting out because you've left a bad taste in their mouths. So the Chrome extension means both speed *and* visibility"—and not just

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partial visibility, Arquay emphasizes. "I can see the *entirety* of the team's communications with a candidate from the extension. I can see if someone has communicated with a candidate outside the usual channels. I can see exactly *what* we've communicated with candidates—are we being consistent; is our messaging clean?"

Recruiter/Hiring Manager Collaboration in Gem

In their top-of-funnel efforts, Arquay says Gem has allowed for successful partnerships on a number of fronts. One is through send-on-behalf-of (SOBO), a feature that allows recruiters to reach out to prospective candidates *as though* they were the manager. "Granted," Arquay says, "it's important to me that this strategy is used sparingly; but when it's done well, it's *super* advantageous. We use SOBO for director and senior manager roles. And I'll typically personalize it." For example, Arquay recently combed her network and gave a recruiter "20 or so referrals. And I was like, *This* person I met at a conference;

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this person I've had multiple conversations with; so when you reach out on behalf of me, please say *this*. When someone responds, I get a copy of that reply. And then I have a back-and-forth with them." Arquay adds that she also makes a lot of calls. "A prospect will receive a SOBO email and reply that they want to chat. When I call them, *that* touchpoint gets logged in Gem, too. The engagement feels organic, because it *is*—the recruiter applies their expertise when it comes to the messaging; but it's personalized and has my name on it, which is compelling for those recipients."

Arquay describes Gem as a place where best practices can be collaboratively unearthed. "For example, one of our managers wrote a particularly strong sequence that performed really well—the structure, the links, it was *gold*. Our recruiters saw the metrics in Gem; they dug into what the EM had written and started utilizing that message as a default." The benefit of having managers craft outreach, Arquay explains, "is they're closer to the role. They know what projects to highlight. They know what lights a candidate up. So they craft an outreach, and recruiters immediately benefit from that subject-matter expertise." Beyond knowledge-sharing, Gem is also a laboratory for "low-effort outreach experiments. Will folks click on *this* link? Will they respond to *this* emoji? Or more broadly speaking, how viable does the market think we are right now based on our open rate? And we don't have to keep track of any of it. Gem just feeds us the data, and we use the results of those experiments to move on and optimize."

Recruiting Data for Engineering Leadership

Webflow's eng managers "are in Gem every single day, multiple times a day," Arquay says. But for the VP of Engineering, "Gem often magically comes to *me* because I have such great partners." Recruiters bring data from Gem's Talent Pipeline (which shows all of Webflow's active candidates at a glance) and Pipeline Analytics (which shows conversion rates and time-in-stage) to their weekly "rundowns" with Arquay. "I'll ask, Who are our active candidates, and where are they in process? That data takes them virtually no time to pull."

Arquay goes into Gem *herself* when she's looking for certain data points or curious about specific candidates. "I'm in charge of all of engineering," she explains; "and at this level, I have to look holistically. How is eng recruiting *going*?" Gem's Executive Dashboards give Arquay a birds-eye view of where eng recruiting stands at any given moment: total hires, average time to hire, offer accept rate, offer-accepts by gender and by source, offer decline reasons—all of this is available at a glance. But "I also go into Gem when I want to check on certain candidates and see if they're responding. Maybe I've been trying to recruit an infrastructure director for

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a while. What's going on with that outreach? What does that pipeline look like? Gem scratches that itch to immediately know where an open role stands. And if I've combed my own network and put candidates in Gem—like I did recently—and I'm curious about who's biting, *all* of that is right there. I have the answer in just a few clicks. If no one's responding, it's up to *me* to ask, Is there something I can do here? Can I send a personal note?"

This is what Arquay means when she speaks of recruiting as a team sport at Webflow: recruiting and leadership meet—supported by the same technologies—to move the needle on eng headcount through each individual's capacities and best efforts. "I simply don't think my team could be as involved in the hiring process as they are now if it weren't for Gem," she says. "We'd *want* to be, of course; but Gem is the first solution I've seen that makes this kind of collaboration both low-effort and illuminating. So my team can build both a powerful product *and* their own org at the same time."

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To learn more about how Gem can help your team, visit gem.com or contact us at info@gem.com

Gem

Gem is an all-in-one recruiting platform that integrates with LinkedIn, Gmail, Outlook, and your ATS. We enable data-driven, world-class recruiting teams to find, engage, and nurture top talent.