

## WHY NOW IS THE BEST TIME IN 20 YEARS TO MAKE A JOB MOVE IN E-DISCOVERY

Right now, the e-discovery job market is 100% a candidate's market. The tables have turned. Here is how it happened and why right now is the single best time to take your career to market in over 20 years.

BY JARED COSEGLIA, TRU STAFFING PARTNERS

In less than three months, the e-discovery job market has gone from a client-driven context rife with pandemic hesitation, budgetary constraints, and lack of headcount approvals to the fastest, most voluminous season of hiring in over 20 years. Right now, the e-discovery job market is 100% a candidate's market. The tables have turned. Here is how it happened and why right now is the single best time to take your career to market in over twenty years.

### How Did This Happen?

When lawyers began accepting remote staffing as a viable perpetual solution, their expectations of service also changed. Levels of responsiveness (often 24/7 availability) from their vendors or internal law firm/corporate support staff increased while caseloads and litigation skyrocketed across the globe. Couple this with the increasing adoption of MSA (Master Service Agreement) relationships and contracts for discovery and the heightened

expectation of service from providers has exploded in both temporal and geographic coverage as well as service sophistication.

Concurrently, the speed of talent acquisition in the now post-pandemic e-discovery job market has made retention and replacement an almost insurmountable challenge for providers and firms. Since most organizations are willing to hire remote anywhere domestically for the right role, they need fewer candidates to choose from before making a hire. Additionally, almost 90% of all interviews are now done virtually, so the actual interview process has been truncated exponentially. These two factors, combined with the prescient pressure to add to staff based on client demand, have pressed companies into a corner where they must act instantly, hire fast/fire fast, and develop talent onboarding processes to allow for the seamless ability for new hires to begin billing nearly instantaneously.



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The sum of this equation is simple: companies are willing to pay top dollar for top talent and will do so very quickly. There is simply no time to waste.

### Why Move Now?

Candidates exploring jobs in the middle of the job market (ESI project managers, data processing analysts, forensic collection examiners, and some middle management roles) can interview with

multiple companies or law firms for similar or like positions and consider multiple full-time offers, often helping negotiations with their ultimate choice. Six months ago, a job seeker was lucky to find any opportunity, much less accelerate their earning potential. Demand has not been this high with active job seeker supply this low since 2004. In Q1 of 2021, candidates who took full-time roles through TRU saw an average 22% increase in base compensation.

Another reason to move now is to switch from full-time employment to the contract lifestyle. Why? ESI mid-market contractors typically make their full-time salary in less than eight months on contract. Contracting means a return to paid overtime at time and a half. Contracting right now generally means working remotely from home. Despite an aggressive resurgence in full-time headcount approvals for discovery pros, the shift in hiring modality to contract resources is now the new normal. Over 50% of all job orders received in ESI by TRU are contracts, which means when one contract ends, another begins. So, the fear that there will not be perpetual contract work for a project manager or data analyst is just that—nothing but fear. Ninety-two percent of TRU contractors either finish their assignment and start a new one within a month or get converted into full-time employees while on contract.

### What's Hottest?

The jobs in highest demand for ESI pros going into Q2 2021 will undoubtedly be second-shift project manager and data analyst coverage. Vendors and law firms need equal caliber support from the hours of 4 p.m. EST to 12 a.m. EST that their clients would expect during normal business hours. This is the new norm. These jobs are often contract, but even when full-time, the compensations can be slightly higher than their daytime counterparts—the reward for working the less desirable shift.

Forensic examiners and collections professionals are next in order of highest demand. The volume of remote collection work is overwhelming, the demand for on-premise collections resurging, and the geographic outreach of vendors is remarkably diminished by unwilling travelers and fewer flight availabilities. If you understand basic ESI data collection from enterprise, mobile, and social media, you are in high demand. If you are willing to travel now, you command a premium.

Finally, TRU would be remiss not to mention the continuous and overwhelming demand for privacy professionals. More and more e-discovery pros are expected to understand privacy law and PII review extraction. Privacy hiring



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managers are now tapping ESI professionals for in-house corporate roles in privacy programs because the privacy community suffers from extreme demand and low talent supply syndrome. With that community also pulling talent out of ESI, the war for talent within only intensifies.

Now is the best time in 20 years to make a move in e-discovery. Almost everyone is hiring and paying above market rate for relief. Who do you admire and want to work for? Chances are, they need you.

***Jared Michael Coseglia** is the founder and CEO of TRU Staffing Partners, an award-winning staffing company representing talent and opportunities in the data privacy, e-discovery, and cybersecurity verticals since 2010. Coseglia has successfully placed over 3000 professionals in full-time and temporary positions at the Fortune 1000, Am Law 200, and throughout the global consultancy, service and software provider community.*