

Five Creative Ways to Source and Keep Labor for Your DSD Business: What Business Owners Need to Know



Source: IAICDV Distributor Division Members:

- John Corrao: GlacierPoint Enterprises
- Marc Santini: Yumi Ice Cream
- Darrell Roberts: Yumi Ice Cream
- Michael DaPonte: New England Ice Cream
- Luconda Dager: Velvet Ice Cream
- Melissa Leung: TransCold Distribution
- Mike Swenson: Cold Front Distribution
- Todd Michaels: Arctica Frozen Solutions
- Jonathan Touhill: IntegraSys, Inc

In order to remain competitive in the ever-changing landscape of the distribution business, it is important to employ strategies that will help you source and retain quality labor. A recent study by the IAICDV Distributor Division, made up of direct store delivery (DSD) distributors, addressed the need for these strategies by sharing their best practices on the topic. The study revealed the following five strategies as the most effective for sourcing and retaining labor:

Create a Video of Current Employees Demonstrating a "Day in the Life" of an Employee

You want the potential hire to visualize themselves in this role. Take the example of a direct store delivery driver or warehouse worker. Working in a freezer can be extremely challenging and demanding so it is important that your potential hires know what they are getting into before they start. This will show prospective employees what the job entails and help them to better understand if the position is a good fit for them. It will also help to create a sense of camaraderie and make your company more attractive to work for. Michael DaPonte of New England Ice Cream says that "when you visually present the job role in the video, you can avoid turnover due to employees feeling misled about the expectations of the job."

Also, make sure to highlight when your company is doing to keep your employees happy and productive. This could be anything from flexible hours, a comfortable work environment, proper equipment, and adequate pay to company-sponsored events.

Click below to view some "Day in the Life" videos created by IAICDV member, Yumi Ice Cream.

- [Ice Cream Territory Sales Manager](#)
- [Ice Cream Delivery Merchandiser](#)

Use Social Media

Social media is a great way to not only find potential employees but also to show off your company culture. Use hashtags, post pictures and videos, and write blogs that prospective employees will want to read. You can also use social media to run ads for specific positions that you are looking to fill. You can target ads by location, age, and interests which will help you to reach a wider pool of potential applicants. Of course, you also want to post open positions on your website as well.

Typical places to post on social media are:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Instagram
- YouTube
- Indeed.com
- CareerBuilder.com

In-house Referral/Sign-on Bonus - "Good people, Attract Good People"

An in-house referral or sign-on bonus program is a great way to source quality labor. Your current employees are likely to know people who would be a good fit for your company. They can also vouch for the person's character and work ethic. Offer a monetary incentive for every referral that leads to a new hire and you will quickly start to see an influx of quality applicants. You can also offer a sign-on bonus to new hires as an added incentive to join your company.

Luconda Dager from Velvet Ice Cream says that "we offer a \$50 bonus when the referred person completes their first 30 days with the company. This is followed by a \$100 bonus when the person completes 90 days and an additional \$150 bonus at 180 days. This program has been extremely successful in sourcing quality labor for our company. This year, we have happily paid out over \$4,200 in bonuses and our retention rate has increased significantly."

Stay vs. Exit Interviews

Conducting stay interviews is a great way to find out what your employees like and don't like about their job. This information can be used to make changes that will help to improve employee satisfaction and retention. According to Darrell Roberts from Yumi Ice Cream, "We have an open-door policy, but the time is also given to allow for more employee engagement either collectively or individually to ensure all employee's voices are heard in the process. This is a direct correlation to our high employee engagement and low turnover rates."

Conducting exit interviews is also important as it can give you insight into why your employees are leaving. This information can be used to make changes that will help to improve retention. Be sure to conduct exit interviews with all departing employees, not just those who quit. The goal is to gain feedback and input of employees who both voluntary and involuntary decide to

leave the organization. While it may take your HR team some extra effort, you will be able to identify any issues that may be causing your employees to leave. This information is invaluable in developing strategies to improve employee retention.

Summer Bonuses

Summer is a great time to offer bonuses to your employees. The critical 100 days of summer are when your company's sales can make or break your year. This is an especially good idea because we are in a seasonal business and have seasonal employees. Bonuses show your appreciation for a job well done and can help to improve employee satisfaction and retention. As Melissa Leung of Transcold Distribution explains, "The incentive amounts are linked to employee attendance and the number of regular hours worked between April 3rd and September 3rd.

Program Details:

- Incentive Period: April 3 to September 3
- Employees will receive an extra \$1.50 per hour during the incentive period.
- Employees will receive \$250 for 175 Hours worked, \$500 for 250 hours worked, \$750 for 400 hours worked, \$1000 for 550hours worked, \$1500 for 700 hours worked, and \$2000 for 850 hours or more.
- Bonuses will be paid out no later than September 15th

The Bottom Line

As the saying goes, "If you knew better you would do better." By using the strategies outlined in this blog post, you can improve your chances of finding and keeping quality employees. The IAICDV Distributor members continue to meet regularly to discuss industry best practices and challenges that all distributors are facing. The goal is to provide the industry with resources and solutions that help to improve overall efficiency and profitability.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or would like to share your own experiences, please email us at info@iaicdv.org . We would love to hear from you.

Thank you for reading and Happy Sourcing!

