

# Case Study?

# SKYWORD

How skyword bypassed the  
competition and augmented  
teams with Optymize

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## SKYWORD

### Partner Overview

Skyword is on a mission to make it easy for brands to tell authentic stories that establish trust and build lasting relationships. They believe that both you and your audience win when you meet their needs with original, expert content



SaaS/Marketing



150 to 200



NodeJS, MongoDB  
React, AWS  
Apache

### The challenge

With main offices in Boston and Washington DC, Skyword faces a hyper competitive scene for finding new front-end and back-end developers, while also needing to backfill vacated positions.

Darryl Gehly, Chief Technology Officer, recalls some of their hiring frustrations. "We had problems with the pipeline, just finding good people. And by the time we contact a good candidate,



*continuous...*

## The challenge

they're already interviewing at other companies. They may already have offers on the table. Then you get into a money game." Without the same resources as nearby tech giants, Skyword engineers felt the hiring crunch in their day-to-day work, growing desperate for help.

After offshoring for their technology development, Skyword wanted more team integration for their primary application. "We did not want to ship specifications off and have asynchronous communication with engineers who don't get to know each other. We really wanted to find people who felt like they were part of the team."

Above all, Darryl remained committed to company morale, culture, and job performance. "We didn't want to send a message that we'd given up on hiring, or have engineers terrified that we were going to outsource everything. Then you have people who aren't on board with helping the project succeed." A pilot with Optymize sounded like both a solution and a good fit culturally.



## The solution

In September, Skyword hired their first two Optymize Devs, Justin Michela and Shairine Manlosa, who joined a high functioning, diverse, and already partially remote team. The team's focus on brand new features allowed for smooth introductions and onboarding without requiring too much in-depth context.

Justin and Shairine gelled quickly with their teammates on a trip to New York. "They felt part of a close-knit team," Darryl recalls. "That trip clinched the fact that we could expand other teams, and we brought on four more developers at the end of last year." Optymize engineers' drive and initiative has been standout, giving Skyword ease of mind with their dependability and willingness to go above and beyond.

When a team lead took a 2-week vacation, Justin oversaw the back-end team. "Some issues came up and Justin was right there on Slack. He was on pager duty

*continuous...*



## The solution

rotation and said, "I'm going to take care of this." Another engineer on the API team handled an off-hours customer issue, getting online at 5:00 a.m. to figure out the problem. Another Optymize engineer started out on back-end work, and used his full-stack experience to transition to front-end. "It was great to see that kind of flexibility," Darryl says.

An added benefit has been adopting Optymize best practices to improve the experience for all Skyword remote employees. "Optymize has taught us a lot about a distributed workforce. We make sure if one person is on Zoom, we're all on Zoom. We instituted a policy of putting decisions on the Slack channel, making decisions on Zoom so people aren't left out. It was Optymize that spurred those changes."

Currently, six Optymize engineers work across three Skyword teams: two on the application team, two on analytics, and two on the platform team, building out API capability for integrations.





They've got a sense of ownership in the product they're building- this is the difference between outsourcing a project and having a team augmentation experience.

**Darryl Gehly**  
Chief Technology Officer Skyword

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# Partner with Us



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