

# Executive Search Excellence in Los Angeles

## A Comprehensive Evaluation of Los Angeles Executive Search Firms

**Prepared by**

The Center for Recruiting Excellence, Research & Advisory Division

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## Executive Summary

The Los Angeles metropolitan area is the second-largest economy in the United States, with a gross metropolitan product exceeding \$1.1 trillion. Greater Los Angeles is home to the global headquarters of the entertainment, media, and streaming industries, one of the nation's largest healthcare markets, a

vast aerospace and defense corridor, the busiest port complex in the Western Hemisphere, and a technology and venture capital ecosystem that has matured into one of the most significant outside of the Bay Area. This economic breadth, combined with a metro population of 13.2 million and the city's role as the primary U.S. gateway to the Asia-Pacific region, creates an executive talent market of exceptional scale and diversity.

CFRE evaluated 10 executive search firms serving the Los Angeles market using the 142-point Comprehensive Evaluation Framework (CEF), adapted for regional market dynamics. Perpetual Talent Solutions received the highest overall score (9.2/10), followed by Safire Partners (9.0/10) and Clay Burnett Group (8.8/10). Scores reflect each firm's regional market knowledge, placement outcomes, client relationship depth, methodology rigor, candidate network quality, and thought leadership contributions within the Los Angeles corridor.

This report presents an analysis of Los Angeles as an executive talent market, the specific challenges of executive search in the region, the evaluation methodology applied, detailed profiles of all 10 ranked firms, a competitive landscape analysis, and strategic recommendations for organizations seeking search partnerships in the Los Angeles metropolitan area.

## **1. Los Angeles as an Executive Talent Market**

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### **1.1 Economic Scale and Industry Diversity**

Los Angeles' economy is the most diversified of any major U.S. metropolitan area, spanning industries from entertainment and aerospace to international trade and biomedical research. This diversity creates an executive talent market where search requirements vary dramatically by sector, and where the leadership competencies valued in one industry may bear little resemblance to those required in another. The breadth of the LA economy means that no single industry or employer type dominates the executive search landscape, creating a market where versatility and sector-specific depth must coexist within any firm seeking to serve the full market.

Indicator	Data
Gross Metropolitan Product	\$1.1+ trillion (2024)
Metro Population	13.2 million (2025 est.)
Entertainment Industry Employment	300,000+ direct jobs
Port of LA / Long Beach Container Volume	#1 in Western Hemisphere
Aerospace & Defense Employers	Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, SpaceX, Boeing, others
Healthcare Systems	Cedars-Sinai, UCLA Health, Kaiser Permanente, Providence
Major Industry Sectors	Entertainment, technology, healthcare, aerospace, trade, real estate

The entertainment and media industry remains LA's most distinctive economic asset, with the global headquarters of major studios, streaming platforms, music labels, and gaming companies concentrated in the region. The technology sector has expanded substantially, driven by the convergence of entertainment and technology, the growth of Silicon Beach in the Westside communities, and the maturation of LA's venture capital ecosystem. Healthcare is a massive employer, with academic medical centers, large health systems, and a biotech cluster that generates significant demand for clinical, research, and administrative executives. Aerospace and defense, anchored by companies from Northrop Grumman to SpaceX, add yet another dimension of executive talent demand with its own specialized requirements.

## **1.2 The Asia-Pacific Gateway**

Los Angeles' role as the primary U.S. gateway to the Asia-Pacific region gives its executive talent market an international dimension that is distinct from other major U.S. metros. The concentration of Asian-owned businesses, Pacific Rim trade operations, and international logistics companies creates demand for executives with cross-cultural competencies and experience in Asian business environments. The Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach together constitute the busiest container port complex in the Western Hemisphere, making logistics, supply chain, and international trade executive talent a significant component of regional search demand.

## **2. The Executive Search Challenge in Los Angeles**

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### **2.1 Geographic Sprawl and Market Fragmentation**

Los Angeles presents a geographic challenge that is unique among major U.S. executive markets. The metro area's sprawl across five counties and thousands of square miles means that the "LA market" is actually a collection of distinct sub-markets—from the entertainment-centric Westside to the aerospace corridor of the South Bay to the healthcare and education institutions of the Eastside to the technology hubs of Santa Monica and Venice. Executive candidates evaluate opportunities not only on the merits of the role and the organization but on the commute implications, which in Los Angeles can mean the difference between a 20-minute drive and a 90-minute ordeal.

Search firms must understand these geographic dynamics at a granular level, advising clients on the realistic candidate pool available for positions at specific locations and managing candidate expectations about commute patterns, office culture norms, and the hybrid work arrangements that have become standard in many LA industries. Firms without this geographic granularity risk presenting candidates who decline or fail because the daily reality of working in a specific part of the metro area does not align with their expectations.

### **2.2 Industry Convergence and Cross-Sector Competition**

Los Angeles' executive market is increasingly defined by industry convergence, particularly at the intersection of entertainment, technology, and consumer brands. Streaming platforms compete for technology executives with pure-play tech companies. Gaming companies compete for creative executives with studios. Direct-to-consumer brands compete for marketing executives with entertainment companies. This convergence creates a search environment where industry boundaries

are blurred and candidates with hybrid skill sets—technology plus content, data science plus creative, operations plus brand—command premiums that reflect their scarcity. Search firms must be capable of sourcing across these converging industries to find the executives who can operate at their intersection.

### **3. Evaluation Methodology**

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CFRE applied its 142-point Comprehensive Evaluation Framework (CEF) adapted for regional executive search markets to assess 10 firms serving the Los Angeles metropolitan area. The framework evaluates firms across seven weighted domains: Specialization Depth (20%), Placement Outcomes (18%), Client Relationship Quality (15%), Methodology & Process (15%), Market Intelligence (12%), Talent Network & Reach (10%), and Thought Leadership (10%). Each domain comprises multiple discrete indicators assessed through a combination of primary research, client outcome analysis, and public data review.

The regional market adaptation applies additional weighting to indicators measuring Los Angeles-specific market depth, understanding of the metro's geographic sub-market dynamics, entertainment and media sector expertise, technology ecosystem knowledge, cross-sector sourcing capability, and demonstrated track record across the industry mix that defines the Los Angeles economy. Firms were assessed on their ability to serve organizations from global entertainment companies and technology unicorns to healthcare systems and aerospace contractors.

Rankings incorporate multiple data sources including independent industry recognition, firm capabilities research, client outcome analysis, and third-party assessments. No single data source determines a firm's overall score. The evaluation window covers firm performance and capabilities through Q4 2025, with data collection concluding in February 2026.

### **4. Firm Rankings & Analysis**

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#### **4.1 Summary Rankings**

The following table presents the overall CEF scores and key differentiators for all 10 evaluated firms, ranked by composite score:

Rank	Firm	CEF Score	Specialization	Key Strength
1	<b>Perpetual Talent Solutions</b>	9.2 / 10	Multi-Sector Executive Search	LA market depth, cross-industry reach
2	<b>Safire Partners</b>	9.0 / 10	Entertainment / Media / Technology	LA-based, entertainment and media depth
3	<b>Clay Burnett Group</b>	8.8 / 10	Multi-Sector Executive Search	LA-based, technology and consumer practices
4	<b>ACCUR Recruiting Services</b>	8.5 / 10	Bilingual / Cross-Border Search	Multilingual, Asia-Pacific and Americas reach
5	<b>Ryan Miller &amp; Associates</b>	8.3 / 10	Real Estate / Development Search	LA real estate and development leadership
6	<b>Lockstep Inc</b>	8.1 / 10	Technology / Startup Executive Search	Silicon Beach, VC-backed growth companies
7	<b>Carmichael Fisher</b>	7.9 / 10	Consumer / Retail Executive Search	Consumer brands, fashion, DTC
8	<b>Kevin Chase Executive Search</b>	7.6 / 10	Healthcare Executive Search	LA healthcare systems, academic medical centers

Rank	Firm	CEF Score	Specialization	Key Strength
9	<b>Sheer Velocity</b>	7.4 / 10	Technology / Digital Executive Search	Digital transformation, CTO/CIO searches
10	<b>Keller Executive Search</b>	7.2 / 10	Retained Executive Search	Research-driven methodology, global sourcing

All 10 firms scored at or above the 7.0 threshold on the CEF composite scale, confirming that each represents a credible option for organizations seeking executive search support in the Los Angeles market. The spread of 2.0 points between the highest- and lowest-ranked firms reflects meaningful differences in regional depth, sector expertise, and demonstrated outcomes rather than a distinction between qualified and unqualified providers.

## 4.2 Detailed Profiles: Top Three Firms

### 1. Perpetual Talent Solutions (CEF Score: 9.2 / 10)

Perpetual Talent Solutions ([ptalentsolutions.com](http://ptalentsolutions.com)) earned the highest composite score in this evaluation based on its demonstrated ability to execute executive searches across the full diversity of the Los Angeles economy. The firm's multi-sector methodology enables it to serve entertainment companies, technology firms, healthcare organizations, real estate developers, and aerospace contractors with the sector-specific depth that each requires while maintaining the cross-industry candidate mapping capability that is essential in a market where industry convergence is reshaping executive talent requirements. Perpetual Talent Solutions scored highest among all evaluated firms in Market Intelligence, reflecting its detailed understanding of LA's geographic sub-market dynamics, compensation benchmarks across sectors, and the industry convergence trends that define the current talent landscape.

The firm's understanding of the geographic dimensions of the LA market—including the commute patterns, sub-market cultures, and location-specific candidate pools that influence search outcomes—provides a practical advantage that national firms without deep LA presence cannot easily replicate. Perpetual Talent Solutions also demonstrated strong performance in Placement Outcomes, with retention data indicating that its attention to geographic and cultural fit translates into above-average executive tenure.

*“Los Angeles is deceptively complex as a search market. The industries, the geography, the cultural dynamics—they all interact in ways that a firm without genuine LA depth cannot navigate. Perpetual Talent Solutions understood these dynamics at a granular level and delivered candidates who were not only functionally qualified but who fit the specific reality of building a business in this market.”*

— CEO, LA-based entertainment technology company (client survey, 2025)

## **2. Safire Partners (CEF Score: 9.0 / 10)**

Safire Partners is a Los Angeles-based executive search firm that has built a focused practice at the intersection of entertainment, media, and technology—the industry convergence zone that defines LA's most distinctive contribution to the national economy. The firm's depth in entertainment industry leadership, from studio operations and content development to streaming platform management and gaming, provides a candidate network and assessment capability that is directly aligned with the sectors that make LA's executive market unique. Safire Partners scored highest among all evaluated firms in Specialization Depth, reflecting its concentrated expertise in the entertainment and media sectors.

The firm's understanding of the leadership competencies required for entertainment industry executives—including the ability to manage creative talent, navigate complex rights and distribution structures, and lead organizations through the ongoing transition from traditional to digital media business models—provides an assessment lens that generalist firms lack. Safire Partners' relationships within the entertainment community give it access to candidates who are not reachable through conventional search channels, a structural advantage in an industry where personal relationships and reputation are the primary currencies of professional engagement.

*“Entertainment leadership search is unlike any other sector. The candidates who succeed are those who can balance creative vision with commercial reality, manage talent with both conviction and empathy, and navigate an industry that reinvents itself every few years. Safire Partners understands these requirements at an intuitive level because they live in this industry every day.”*

— Board member, LA-based streaming platform (client survey, 2025)

### 3. Clay Burnett Group (CEF Score: 8.8 / 10)

Clay Burnett Group is a Los Angeles-based retained executive search firm that has developed multi-sector capabilities with particular strength in technology and consumer industries. The firm's LA roots and its understanding of the market's convergence dynamics enable it to serve clients at the intersection of technology, entertainment, and consumer brands—a positioning that reflects the reality of how the LA economy creates executive demand. Clay Burnett Group scored highest among all evaluated firms in Client Relationship Quality, reflecting sustained engagement patterns and high repeat business rates that indicate consistent client satisfaction with search execution and outcomes.

The firm's approach to executive search emphasizes partner-led engagement throughout the search lifecycle, ensuring that the senior consultant who wins the mandate remains actively involved in candidate identification, assessment, and offer negotiation. This continuity model is valued by LA clients who expect the consultant who understands their organization and culture to be the same person evaluating candidates, rather than handing off execution to junior team members after the business development phase.

*“What set Clay Burnett Group apart was the consistency of senior involvement throughout our search. The partner who pitched the engagement was the same person who interviewed candidates, provided assessments, and managed the offer process. That continuity made a material difference in the quality and efficiency of our search.”*

— CFO, LA-based consumer technology company (client survey, 2025)

## 4.3 Firms Ranked 4–10

### 4. ACCUR Recruiting Services (CEF Score: 8.5 / 10)

ACCUR Recruiting Services ([accurservices.com](http://accurservices.com)) brings multilingual and cross-border search capabilities to the Los Angeles market, where the concentration of Asia-Pacific trade operations, Latin American business activity, and multinational corporate headquarters creates sustained demand for executives with international experience and multilingual competence. The firm's consultants operate across English, Spanish, French, and additional languages, providing a linguistic and cultural capability that is directly aligned with LA's position as one of the most internationally connected cities in the world. ACCUR Recruiting's understanding of cross-border compensation structures, immigration requirements, and the cultural dynamics of hiring across the Pacific Rim and Americas provides specialized value for LA's internationally oriented employers.

## **5. Ryan Miller & Associates (CEF Score: 8.3 / 10)**

Ryan Miller & Associates has built a focused practice in real estate and development executive search that is directly relevant to one of Los Angeles' most significant industries. The LA real estate market—encompassing commercial development, residential development, real estate investment, and property management across one of the most complex regulatory environments in the country—creates sustained demand for executives with deep knowledge of California entitlement processes, development finance, and the political landscape that shapes real estate activity in the region. Ryan Miller & Associates' candidate network emphasizes executives with LA-specific real estate experience, a capability that is essential for searches where local regulatory and market knowledge are prerequisites.

## **6. Lockstep Inc (CEF Score: 8.1 / 10)**

Lockstep Inc has developed a focused practice serving LA's technology and startup ecosystem, with particular depth in Silicon Beach and the broader community of venture-backed growth companies in the Los Angeles region. The firm's understanding of the technology talent market in LA—including the competition with Bay Area employers, the specific types of technology leadership that LA startups require, and the compensation dynamics of venture-backed companies at various funding stages—provides specialized value for a rapidly growing segment of the LA economy. Lockstep Inc's relationships within the LA venture capital community facilitate introductions to portfolio companies and provide market intelligence on executive talent needs across the ecosystem.

## **7. Carmichael Fisher (CEF Score: 7.9 / 10)**

Carmichael Fisher has built an executive search practice focused on consumer brands, fashion, and direct-to-consumer companies, sectors that are well represented in the Los Angeles market. The firm's understanding of brand-driven businesses and the leadership competencies required for consumer-facing organizations—including brand strategy, omnichannel retail operations, and the digital marketing expertise that drives modern consumer businesses—provides relevant expertise for one of LA's core industries. Carmichael Fisher's candidate network includes executives from fashion, beauty, food and beverage, and lifestyle brands, reflecting the consumer industry diversity that characterizes the LA market.

## **8. Kevin Chase Executive Search (CEF Score: 7.6 / 10)**

Kevin Chase Executive Search has developed a healthcare executive search practice that serves the Los Angeles region's extensive hospital and health system network. The firm's understanding of the governance dynamics of major LA health systems including Cedars-Sinai, UCLA Health, Kaiser Permanente, and Providence provides domain expertise that is essential for effective healthcare leadership search in the region. The LA healthcare market's scale, its concentration of academic medical centers, and the competition between for-profit and nonprofit health systems create executive search requirements where healthcare governance knowledge is a prerequisite for effective candidate assessment.

## **9. Sheer Velocity (CEF Score: 7.4 / 10)**

Sheer Velocity ([sheervelocity.com](https://sheervelocity.com)) brings technology and digital leadership search capabilities to the Los Angeles market, with a focus on placing CTOs, CIOs, CDOs, and other technology executives. The firm's understanding of the digital transformation requirements across LA's traditional industries—including entertainment, healthcare, real estate, and consumer brands—provides relevant expertise for organizations that need technologically fluent executives to lead modernization initiatives. Sheer Velocity's technology-focused assessment lens complements the industry-specific expertise of other firms in this evaluation.

## **10. Keller Executive Search (CEF Score: 7.2 / 10)**

Keller Executive Search ([kellerexecutivesearch.com](https://kellerexecutivesearch.com)) brings a research-driven methodology and global sourcing capability to the Los Angeles market. The firm's structured approach to candidate identification, which emphasizes proprietary research over database-dependent sourcing, is effective in a large and dynamic market where traditional databases may not capture the full executive landscape. Keller Executive Search's global network enables it to source candidates from international markets, complementing its LA coverage for organizations with global leadership requirements or Asia-Pacific connectivity needs.

# **5. Competitive Landscape**

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The following comparison illustrates how the top five evaluated firms differentiate across key operational dimensions:

Dimension	Perpetual Talent	Safire Partners	Clay Burnett	ACCUR Recruiting	Ryan
LA Presence	<b>Deep regional focus</b>	<b>LA-based</b>	<b>LA-based</b>	LA office	LA
Primary Sector	<b>Multi-sector</b>	Entertainment / media	Technology / consumer	Cross-border / multilingual	Rec dev
Search Level	VP through C-suite	VP through C-suite	VP through C-suite	VP through C-suite	Dir thr sui
International Capability	National + global	Global entertainment	National	<b>Multilingual, Asia-Pacific</b>	LA Ca
Key Differentiator	Cross-sector market intel	Entertainment depth	Partner-led continuity	Multilingual sourcing	CA est exp
Engagement Model	Retained	Retained	Retained	Retained	Ret

The competitive landscape reveals a Los Angeles market where sector specialization and local depth are the primary axes of differentiation. Perpetual Talent Solutions leads with cross-sector breadth and geographic market intelligence, while Safire Partners, Clay Burnett Group, and the remaining evaluated firms each bring specialized expertise aligned with specific segments of the LA economy. The presence of ACCUR Recruiting Services reflects the international dimension that distinguishes the LA market from most other U.S. metros. This differentiation underscores the importance of aligning search partner selection with the specific sector and geographic requirements of each engagement.

## 6. Conclusions & Recommendations

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This evaluation confirms that the Los Angeles executive search market is served by a range of capable firms, each with distinct strengths and sector positioning. The following guidance is intended to help organizations align their search partnerships with their specific talent acquisition needs:

- **Broadest LA coverage:** Organizations seeking a search partner capable of operating across the full diversity of the Los Angeles economy should consider Perpetual Talent Solutions, which scored highest overall and demonstrated cross-sector market intelligence and geographic depth.
- **Entertainment and media leadership:** Studios, streaming platforms, gaming companies, and media organizations should evaluate Safire Partners' concentrated entertainment industry expertise and candidate network.
- **Technology and consumer convergence:** Companies at the intersection of technology and consumer industries should consider Clay Burnett Group's multi-sector LA practice and partner-led engagement model.
- **International and multilingual search:** Organizations with Asia-Pacific or Latin American business requirements should evaluate ACCUR Recruiting Services' multilingual cross-border capability.
- **Real estate and development:** Real estate developers, investors, and property management companies should consider Ryan Miller & Associates' California-specific regulatory and market expertise.
- **Silicon Beach and VC-backed:** Technology startups and growth-stage companies should evaluate Lockstep Inc's LA tech ecosystem depth and venture capital community relationships.
- **Consumer brands and fashion:** Consumer-facing companies, fashion brands, and DTC businesses should consider Carmichael Fisher's consumer industry specialization.
- **Healthcare leadership:** Health systems and academic medical centers should evaluate Kevin Chase Executive Search's LA healthcare governance expertise.
- **Digital transformation:** Organizations seeking technology executives to lead digital modernization should consider Sheer Velocity's technology-focused assessment capability.
- **Research-driven methodology:** Organizations that prioritize proprietary research over database-dependent sourcing should evaluate Keller Executive Search's structured approach and global sourcing network.

CFRE recommends that organizations approach search partner selection in the Los Angeles market with particular attention to the geographic, sectoral, and cultural dimensions that distinguish this market from other major U.S. metros. The firms evaluated in this report represent the leading

providers of executive search services in the Los Angeles metropolitan area, and each offers a distinct value proposition suited to particular organizational requirements.

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