

SUCCESS STORY

From Recruiter to Trusted Advisor with Data-Driven Legal Market Intelligence from SurePoint®

In an increasingly competitive legal recruiting market, Deborah Nugent, Principal Partner of The Oculus Group has set herself apart by blending relationship-driven recruiting with deeper, data-backed market intelligence.

Using SurePoint Legal Insights (formerly Leopard Solutions), she has transformed how she researches firms, identifies hard-to-find candidates, and advises clients and candidates, building credibility and uncovering opportunities that traditional tools often miss.

Enabling Firm Performance Through Data-Driven Legal Recruiting

With over 15 years in recruiting roles, Deborah Nugent applies a disciplined, market-based approach to the relationship-driven world of legal recruiting. After moving into legal, she found that credibility requires more than a strong network—it demands real-time knowledge of firms, practices, and market movement.

Today, Deborah is a Principal Partner at The Oculus Group, a collective of elite recruiting specialists. She supports Am Law 200 and top boutique firms nationwide by placing partners and practice groups. She also recruits in-house counsel for major entertainment companies, where the right legal hire can influence risk management, deal velocity, and business continuity.



Deborah Nugent, Principal Partner,
The Oculus Group

The Oculus Group At-a-Glance

- **Legal Focus:** Elite recruiting specialist
- **Specialties:** Am Law 200 and in-house counsel for entertainment companies
- **Territory:** U.S.

Across both law firms and corporations, Deborah's work is ultimately performance-driven: helping organizations secure top-tier legal talent with the precision, speed, and market context required to make confident hiring decisions.

The Challenge: Incomplete Data, Lost Opportunities

When Deborah entered legal recruiting, she quickly saw how complex and nuanced the market truly is and how difficult it can be to navigate without reliable data.

Like many recruiters, she relied on tools such as LinkedIn Recruiter. But critical details were often missing or inaccurate, particularly around practice areas and attorney experience. To fill gaps, she turned to Google, ChatGPT, and Reddit, often spending hours piecing together information from multiple sources. "I was doing research everywhere, but the errors in data led me to not trust the results," she explains.

This fragmented approach created serious challenges:

- Qualified candidates were easy to miss
- List building was manual and time-consuming
- Market visibility was limited

Above all, the lack of reliable data made it difficult for Deborah to position herself as a true market expert.

"Prior to Legal Insights, I couldn't share market knowledge at all. And quite frankly, I lost candidates."

— Deborah Nugent, Principal Partner

The Solution: A Complete View of the Legal Market

Deborah learned about SurePoint Legal Insights from peers and clients who consistently recommended it as best-in-class. Once she explored the platform, the difference was clear. As she notes, "The level of data and insight this platform provides is far superior to anything else on the market."

For the first time, Deborah had a complete, reliable view of the legal landscape giving her confidence in both the data and the recommendations she shared. With Legal Insights, she can now:

- Understand firm performance and market positioning
- Identify candidates who may be open to making a move
- Confidently advise candidates and clients using data-backed insight

Favorite Tools & Features

Deborah uses several Legal Insights tools to support her day-to-day recruiting and advisory work:

- **Firmscape Report:** Quickly evaluate firms, refine target lists, and understand competitive positioning
- **Coach's Corner:** Compare firms side by side and guide candidates with clear, data-backed pros and cons
- **Jobs Search:** Identify roles that align with the candidates, matching their experience, preferences, and criteria
- **Laterals Report:** Track attorney movement trends and strengthen strategic conversations

The Results: Recruiter to Trusted Advisor

With Legal Insights, Deborah transformed both her workflow and her impact.

Now, instead of building spreadsheets by hand, she enters exact criteria—like profit per partner, revenue per lawyer, firm size, location, and practice focus—and instantly generates strong firm lists for candidates. What once took hours now takes minutes.

More importantly, Deborah now uncovers opportunities others miss and delivers insights that boost her credibility with both candidates and clients. The results speak for themselves.

- **Stronger credibility:** Data-backed insight builds trust with highly analytical attorneys
- **Expanded candidate pools:** Surface attorneys who would not appear in traditional searches
- **Faster searches:** Eliminate manual research and focus on strategy
- **Competitive advantage:** Access insights that many recruiters simply do not have



Legal Insights' Firmscape Report

“I am making placements and have offers. And many partner-level candidates with multi-million-dollar books of business interviewing that I don’t think I would be able to do without Legal Insights.”

— Deborah Nugent, Principal Partner

From Placement to Partnership

Today, SurePoint Legal Insights enables Deborah to operate as more than a recruiter. With real, factual data behind her recommendations, she has become a strategic advisor, helping candidates and clients make informed, confident decisions in a competitive market.

She notes, “I am able to earn the trust of attorneys and position myself as a strategic legal recruiting consultant—not just someone filling roles.”

Just one year after implementing Legal Insights, the Denver office is generating positive profit, reaching profitability two to three years ahead of original projections. All Denver hires remain with the firm, and leadership is now exploring plans to significantly expand the office.

Learn more about SurePoint Legal Insights:
surepoint.com/legal-insights