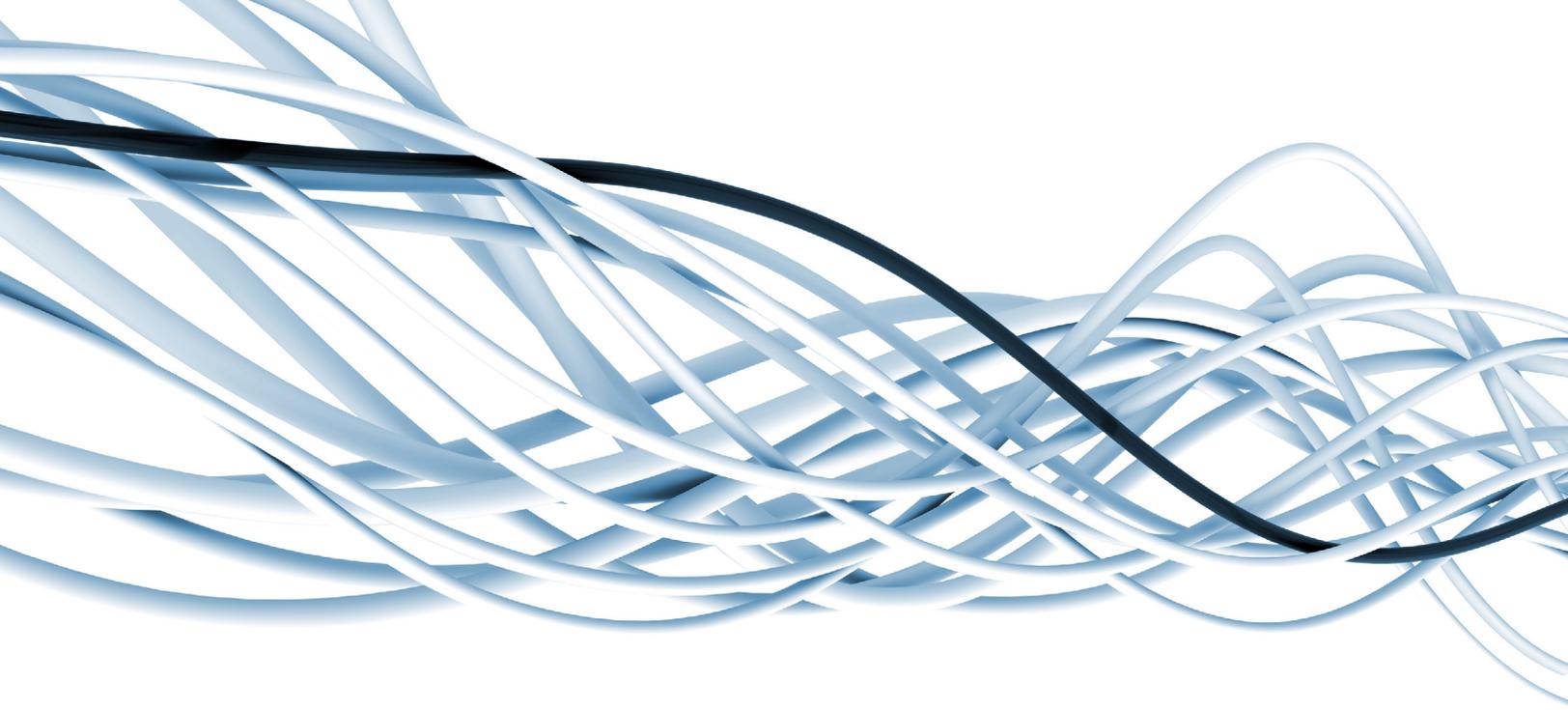




AV Project Managers: How to Find & Hire Freelancers



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As an AV project manager, you wear many hats on a daily basis. On top of keeping the project on time and on budget, you have to provide exemplary customer service every step of the way. It's your job to find the right technicians, programmers, design engineers, drafters, and other AV freelancers for your short-term installation projects—but there are often various roadblocks. The pressure of finding the right freelancers for installation projects in unfamiliar locations alone can be a huge issue. Considering other speed bumps such as procuring competitive quotes, producing work orders and contracts, putting faith in an unfamiliar freelancer, and receiving a timely invoice, an AV project manager's job can be quite the challenge.

Challenge or not, the bottom line is that you need qualified professionals on your team. And if your go-to AV technicians don't possess certain skills, or if you don't have any go-to technicians in the first place because you're working in an unfamiliar location, you must hire reliable AV freelancers with specialized experience. Additionally, when your sales team comes to the installation department with a new project and a short deadline, you need to find labour quickly.

Typically, this can be a stressful situation. It's difficult to ensure the freelancers you hire are as skilled, capable, and reliable as their resume says. You've no doubt heard horror stories from other AV project managers in the industry hiring independent freelancers who really didn't have the qualifications required to take on the projects they were hired to do. AV companies lose money and clients every day, all because of hiring the wrong freelance AV technicians: this, in turn, reflects poorly on project managers.

But there's some good news: When it comes to finding and hiring the right AV freelancers, you have some options. However, some are superior to others.



Option One: Leveraging Referrals

In a largely reputation-based industry, referrals are often an excellent way to find and hire freelancers. Referrals that come with a personal recommendation from a valued colleague, successful past hire, or trustworthy industry professional can help reduce your risk when working with new freelancers. It also cuts through the clutter and makes hiring faster and easier.

However, referrals do have their drawbacks. For one, you can't solely rely on referrals to hire AV freelancers. Your friends, acquaintances, and previous AV technicians might not know of anyone with the skills and experience required for your unique AV projects, or you might be working in an unfamiliar location.

In addition, because these freelancers come referred, project managers might feel inclined to skip on the background check. Freelancers that come from trusted sources still require time-consuming reference checks and other due diligences. You still must proceed with caution.

Option two: Shopping the Freelance Marketplace

At first sight, freelance marketplaces might seem like the best channel for finding AV freelancers. Once you actually start using some of these sites to find talent, however, you might realize that they're not as appealing as they first seem.

Though these channels can put you in contact with freelancers, these types of marketplaces are very broad. They cater to any and all industries—not the AV market in particular. As a result, you'll find yourself spending a significant amount of time and resources sifting through hundreds of profiles of unqualified professionals.

These broad freelance marketplaces have other disadvantages, too. It can be tough to get competitive quotes. Negotiating fixed prices can be a time-consuming, unwarranted hassle. And even if you were to hire good freelancers from these marketplaces, you're on your own for the rest of the process.

There are other freelancer marketplaces out there, and some are better than others. There's little value in using a marketplace that will make your job as a project manager more difficult. Depending on the marketplace, you may find yourself chasing down AV professionals for timely invoices, creating our own contracts, and organizing your own work orders. Proceed with caution and make sure you set realistic expectations while also looking at exactly what the marketplace has to offer.



Option three: Staffing Agencies

Yet another avenue you can take is to hire through a staffing agency. Though these firms can often cater more specifically to the AV industry than a general freelance marketplace, they still aren't ideal.

For one, they typically focus more heavily on AV staging, rather than AV integration. This is great if you're in staging, of course, but difficult if you're seeking talent to work on integration projects. What's more, these staffing agencies aren't strictly freelance. They have qualified candidates on call, but most of them will be looking for permanent, full-time work, which you won't be able to offer.

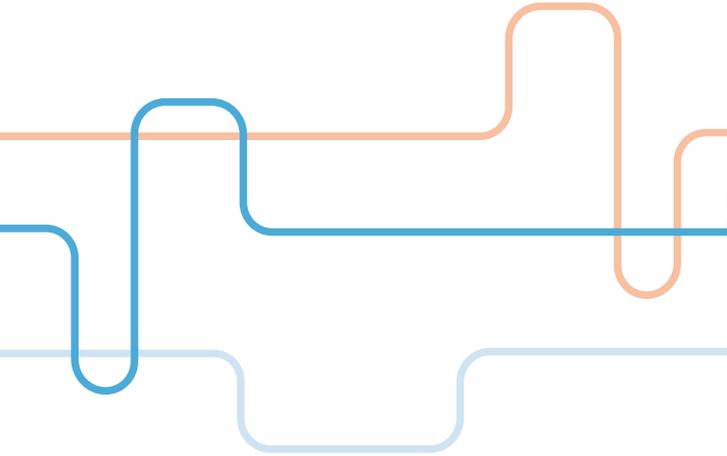
At the same time, even if you do find and hire qualified freelancers with the skills you need to join your team, you might pay hefty sums for their services. Staffing agencies charge a markup for finding you top talent. You will pay not only for the AV professionals' time, but for the staffing

agency's time, too. This can put you over budget for your projects, leading to a smaller profit margin.

As a project manager, you also don't need to complicate your life further by bringing in a middleman. And often-times, it's the coordinator at the staffing agency who is your main contact—not even the AV technician doing the job for you! This, paired with the fact that when you work with a staffing agency, you also give up a lot of control in the search for talent, can really put project managers in the backseat.

The recruiters will seek out talent they think will be the ideal candidates for your project and provide you with a shortlist. You don't have the option to review applications on your own. Losing this much control can be risky when you're the one in charge of ensuring the integration projects go smoothly for your clients.





Option Four: Partnering with AV Labour Companies

AV labour companies can offer you a variety of AV talent to support your projects, including AV technicians, engineers and programmers, and service technicians. These companies can be a good source of talent—in your hometown, that is.

That's because AV labour companies are specific to a region. So if you're working on a project in your own backyard, that's one thing. If you have a project starting in a new location, however, you're probably out of luck. In addition, the AV professionals you'll hire aren't actually freelance—they're on the company's payroll. This isn't ideal when you're looking for independent workers.

What's more, many AV labour companies have a finite number of techs available, so when you choose a marketplace you have many more available technicians for you to select. AV labour companies also get booked up quickly, and can run out of available talent. When that happens, both the AV company and project manager are left stranded.





Option Five: AV Freelancer Marketplace

The other options mentioned above—the ones you’re used to relying on—aren’t ideal. They have many drawbacks. They have risks. But luckily there’s a new option that’s shaking up the industry that you should seriously consider. It’s breaking the status quo. It’s the new way to hire, manage, and pay AV freelancers. It’s the audio visual freelancer marketplace.

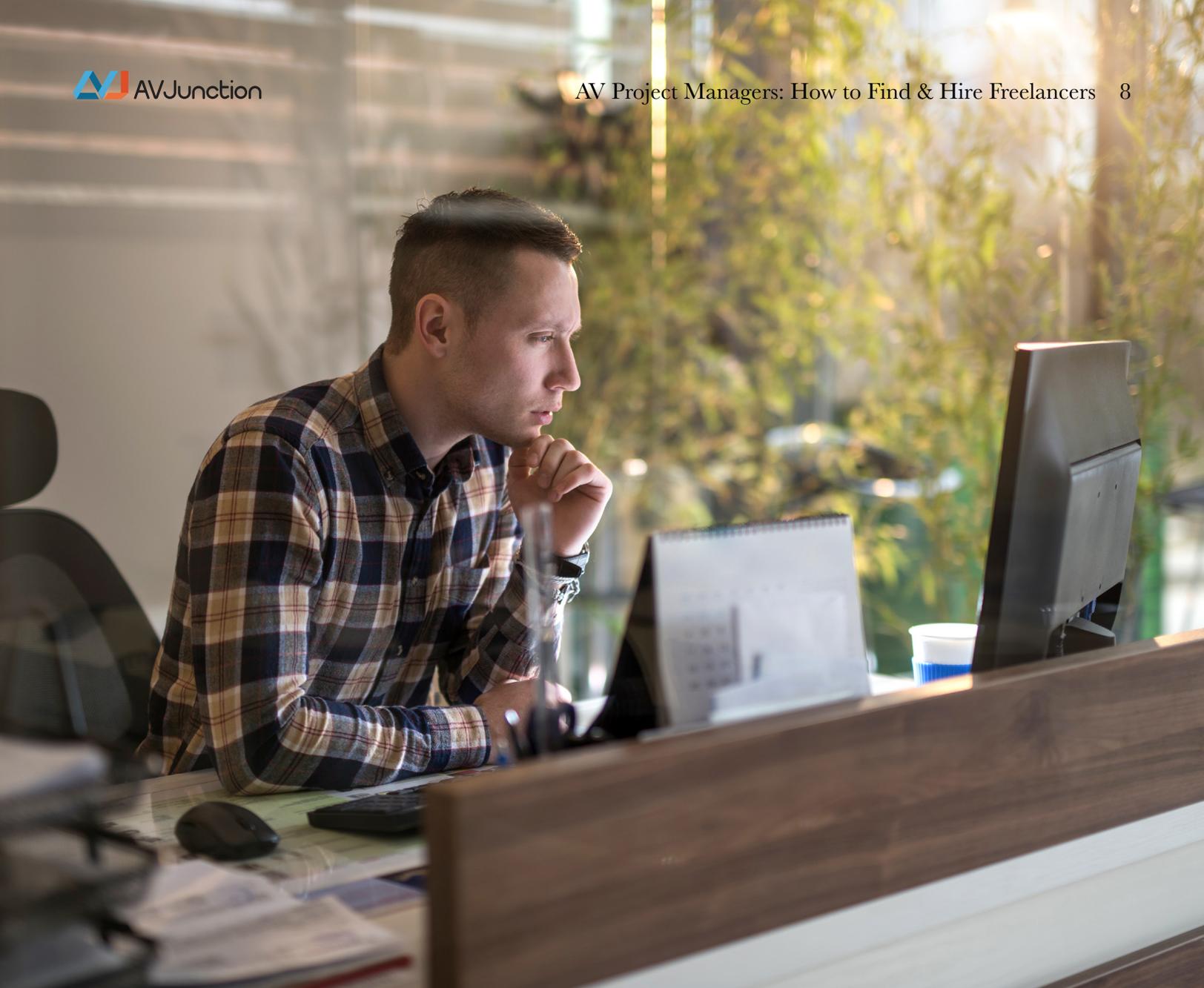
Though using an online AV marketplace might be new to you, it’s undoubtedly your best option for finding and hiring AV freelancers. It doesn’t have the disadvantages or risks of the other options available to you. An AV freelance marketplace is strictly for the AV industry—so you know you’ll find the type of workers you need for any and all projects. Because the marketplace is global, you won’t be limited in talent due to location, either. You can easily connect with AV freelancers all over the world and get the same top talent the locals use.

What’s more, hiring freelancers from other channels comes with financial risks to your company due to the potential for incompetence and misunderstandings. You can’t afford these risks. When you hire through an online AV freelance marketplace, however, you get a guarantee of competence and insurance of the work completion. Plus, freelancers’ certifications are clearly displayed, many freelancers in the marketplace have been verified, and there’s a ratings and feedback system in place that helps ensure AV professionals

can do the work they say they can do. This can offer peace of mind, lead to higher profits, and lead to better customer satisfaction.

You can also reduce your costs by using such a marketplace. There won’t be slim pickings like is often the case with referrals, job boards, staffing agencies, and other channels for hiring AV technicians. You’ll be able to search for qualified professionals for any and all projects, whether by skill, specialty, or location. You will be able to review multiple quotes from professionals at the same time and negotiate with many freelancers simultaneously. Even on short notice, you can hire the professionals you need, because the marketplace is available 24/7 and on demand. You can get the work done at the price you can afford, and have complete control over the decision-making process. As the project manager, you’ll be in the driver’s seat, as you should be.

An AV freelance marketplace isn’t just search and find, either. It can help you manage the entire process. You can negotiate rates and hire freelancers, but most importantly, you can create work orders and contracts easily and efficiently—which are absolutely essential to you as a project manager. Work orders and contracts reduce risks, eliminates understanding, and solidifies the partnership between project managers freelance technician. This makes hiring and managing freelancers simple and easy.



Weigh Your Options...

You want your AV installation projects to go as smoothly as possible. You need proper work orders and contracts. You want to ensure profitability. And you want your customers to be happy. For these positive outcomes to occur, you need to ensure you have the right AV professionals handling your projects.

While you have many options available to you to find and hire AV freelancers, none are as easy or offer as much peace of mind as an AV freelancer marketplace.

the only option you need: **AV Junction**

Whether you're an AV technician, programmer, design engineer, or drafter, not knowing where your next job will be can be stressful. You're a skilled worker, but breaking into the AV industry and building a strong reputation is challenging.

The AV Junction is where AV companies and independent AV freelancers connect. Find more work and enjoy the freedom to choose projects. Showcase your skills and gain a stellar reputation in the industry. Get paid faster and more securely. Join the AV Junction for free today.

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