

CASE STUDY EXCERPT

Sourcing the Turnaround Architect

How a Targeted Passive Search Secured the CPO That Reversed a 14% Churn Rate for an Enterprise SaaS Leader

Executive Summary

When a prominent B2B enterprise SaaS platform hit a growth ceiling, the bottleneck wasn't the sales team, it was the product. Facing a **14% annual customer churn rate** and an engineering team bogged down by technical debt, the board realized they needed a transformative Chief Product Officer (CPO).

After two traditional search firms failed to present candidates with the rare mix of technical grit and commercial vision required, the company partnered with **Pinnacle Search Partners**. Leveraging a precise, narrative-driven passive recruitment methodology, we identified, engaged, and placed a world-class product leader within 62 days, sparking a turnaround that preserved millions in recurring revenue.

The Challenge: A High-Stakes Growth Stall

The company's legacy platform was losing ground to agile, cloud-native competitors. Customer churn was climbing, and development cycles had slowed to a crawl. The incoming leader needed to perform corporate open-heart surgery: completely overhaul the product roadmap, boost engineering morale, and placate restless enterprise clients.

Traditional recruiting methods were yielding "safe," active job-seekers who possessed the right keywords on their resumes but lacked the battle-tested transformation experience the board demanded. The ideal candidate was someone currently thriving in a high-growth environment, someone entirely passive who would require a sophisticated, peer-to-peer approach to even consider a move.

The Strategy: Sourcing the "Passive 1%"

Recognizing that standard job descriptions would fail to attract top-tier talent, **Pinnacle Search Partners** mapped the entire tier-one SaaS ecosystem.

1. **Competency Architecture:** We looked beyond standard titles to identify leaders who had specifically guided legacy tech stacks through cloud-native modernization.
2. **The Peer-Level Narrative:** Instead of pitching a "job opening," our managing partners engaged targets with a compelling strategic narrative: the opportunity to execute a high-profile corporate turnaround with significant equity upside.
3. **Rigorous Discretion:** Because the incumbent product leadership was still in place, the entire outreach required a flawless, confidential vetting process to protect both the client and the prospective candidates.

Within 21 days, our team identified a short-list of three highly qualified, passive candidates who had successfully executed similar turnarounds at major enterprise competitors.

The Outcome: A Catalyst for Enterprise Renewal

The selected candidate—a seasoned VP of Product from a multi-billion-dollar SaaS provider—was placed as CPO within 62 days of initiating the search.

The impact was immediate:

- **Product Alignment:** Within her first 90 days, the new CPO reorganized the engineering architecture and cut delivery cycles by 35%.
- **Churn Reversal:** By delivering key features requested by enterprise accounts, annual customer churn dropped from 14% to an industry-best **3.2%** over 12 months.
- **Valuation Growth:** The stabilized product suite allowed the firm to successfully close a new round of enterprise expansion funding, securing their market-leader position.

"Traditional recruiters sold us resumes. Pinnacle Search Partners sold the vision of our future to the exact leader we needed to build it."

— CEO, Enterprise SaaS Platform