



Human Capital Management
& Payroll Software/Services

Considerations when investing in a new HR software solution

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Investing in a new HR software solution is a big decision and we know you won't take it lightly. It's important to consider a range of factors, not least of which is why you want to make the change and what you hope it will achieve for your business. But beyond those big questions are a myriad of elements that, if all carefully assessed and managed, will ensure you put in place the right system for your business, that you bring your staff with you along the change process, and that you won't need to overhaul it again in a year's time. The best solution will be one that delivers what you need today and is capable of growing with your business tomorrow.

We've put together this handy checklist to walk you through the elements to consider.

Business Case

Why do you want to change your current system? Is it not delivering you the efficiency, the data outcomes or the interactivity and integration that you need? Perhaps you believe it will improve employee engagement. Establishing the Business Case for the change has a number of steps:

1. Conducting a SWOT analysis of your current systems and processes will help you identify the elements you wish to retain (the strengths) and those which cause you pain (the weaknesses). A SWOT analysis will also help you identify the opportunities that you want your new system to capture (e.g. data interrogation or improved integration with other systems) and the threats you'd like to mitigate (e.g. breaches of data security, maintaining your adherence to your legal obligations, resistance to change).
2. Return on Investment – what are you looking for here? Improved productivity? Higher employee satisfaction? Reduced HR staffing hours? Identifying and quantifying what you want a new system to achieve, then comparing this with what your current system is delivering, can help you establish a strong business case for the change.
3. What efficiencies does the HR Solution offer? Are you looking for reduced processing times, easier employee interface so that employee productivity is maximised, or more targeted recruiting processes so you can hire more quickly?
4. Finally, what's the cost to the business of doing nothing? Assessing where your current system is letting you down will help you quantify the benefits of putting a more efficient, tailored solution in place.

Functionality and Objectives

Every company is different and a one-size-fits-all solution risks delivering you some but not all of the functionality you require. It's important to really think about what you want the system to deliver so that as much as possible can be built into it from the start. That said, a good system will be adaptable to your changing needs, so don't get too worried if you can't think of everything right now!

Answering the following questions will put you well on the way to ensuring that your new system contains the functionality you require right now and meets your objectives going into the future:

1. What are your *unique challenges*? What are the aspects of HR for your company that cause you the most heartache?
2. What *data* do you need to collect? For example, do you have diversity targets or are you likely to in the future? Do you need to accurately assess your long-term leave obligations at any given time?
3. What *customisations* do you require? These may be site-specific or even employee-specific.
4. How will the system *integrate* into your company's other systems and processes? What are the must-haves?
5. What are your objectives for the system? Do you want to achieve cost savings? Better customisation? Improved efficiency and turnaround times? Better targeting? Compliance? A higher degree of automation? Make a list and prioritise them.

Success Criteria

Creating a clear list of objectives is critical if you want to measure the success of your new system. We suggest giving thought to each of the following categories:

Reporting and Analytics



We live in a world where information is power and where our ability to extract information using technology is unparalleled. The faster you can have access to the information you need, the faster you can respond to both opportunities and threats. Our software can be tailored to your company's specific needs.

1. What are the standard reports you require the system to generate automatically? These can be programmed to arrive in the in-box of the relevant personnel without you needing to lift a finger.
2. What capacity for ad hoc reporting do you require? The system is as flexible as you need it to be.
3. What level of detail do you need? Can the software can be written to offer everything from overview reports for the board and senior management right through to the sort of tailored, in-depth reporting required by those who need to drill down into the data.
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5. What access to reports do you want to put in place via your Employee Self-Service (ESS) system? You can put power into the hands of your employees by providing them with the information they need to make informed decisions about their own priorities.

Interface – Employee Experience

If you've used a frustratingly clunky software interface, you'll know how demotivating it can be. Software needs to be easy-to-use and intuitive if it's to inspire confidence in your employees and motivate them to achieve the same success levels in their own work.

When analysing your current situation, find out what your employees like and don't like about your current system. Is it intuitive? Do they need too many clicks to get where they need to go? Does it give them confidence that their data is secure? Can they access other business systems via the interface or do you have silo-ed systems that you'd like to integrate? For example, if you have in-house training, is this integrated with employee professional development plans or performance assessments? Does the system support employee mobility across sites? Does it encourage the development of inter-disciplinary or inter-site teams?

Technology

It's important to assess your underlying technology platform to see if it's fit for purpose. What technology does your current HR system use? Do you want to maintain or change this? Think about whether your new HR system needs to integrate with other technology in your business or whether it can be stand-alone. Bring in your IT team at the earliest opportunity and ensure that they're integrated into the decision-making process. They'll help you answer key questions about your current capacity and the capacity you'll require as you build scale and change with business conditions.

A key issue to consider is whether to keep your system on-premise or to use the cloud. An example of the flexibility that Frontier Software can offer is illustrated through our long-standing client, Retail Zoo. In 2015, after a period of significant growth and change, Retail Zoo recognised the strategic advantage of re-establishing their payroll team in-house. Having hired competent payroll resources with considerable experience of our software system, the team at Retail Zoo felt confident they could move to an on-premise model. Consulting their Frontier Software account manager, an effective solution was devised; Retail Zoo could simply move their database from Frontier Software servers to one of their own. At Frontier Software, we call it 'lift and shift'.

Implementation and Upgrades

A poor changeover can impact productivity and affect how your employees will view the new system. Getting the implementation process right is vital, whether it's implementing a completely new system or upgrading an existing one.

Consider the timeframe you'll need and build in contingency. Can you implement or upgrade at a quiet time? Think about whether the process need to be staged to ensure that some functionality from the old system is still in place or whether you want to send the whole system "live" at once. You may have internal requirements that mean a whole-of-company upgrade is not possible; in this case, plan how you want to stage the upgrade, whether that's site-specific or department-specific. Perhaps you'll want to upgrade each aspect of the system one at a time, e.g. payroll, recruitment, training, etc.

Communicating the change is critical. Put in place a communications plan covering all key stakeholders and ensure that you have a point of contact for any questions. Developing a FAQ can be helpful but it's also important to have someone responsible for change management and communication across the company. Consider having change "champions" at a team or department level who can answer employee questions face-to-face and be a positive force for the change.

Successful change management is about managing expectations and having clear communication channels, so at this point it's time for you to consider what assistance the vendor will provide. At Frontier Software, we're experienced in supporting our clients to manage the change process and we place a strong emphasis on getting these two aspects – managing expectations and clear communication – right. Once the key decisions about your new system have been made, we'll advise you, based on our deep experience, of realistic expectations and timeframes for the project, so that you can be clear with your employees. We pride ourselves on there being no surprises.

Vendor Assessment



You may be in the position of assessing a number of vendors for your HR software system project. How will you compare one with another? Our experience has taught us that these five considerations are critical in the successful design, delivery, implementation and ongoing support of a new HR software system:

1. Reputation and experience

Happy customers are a good sign that a company is doing something right. Frontier Software's customers include many returning clients and the customer testimonials on our website attest to our excellent reputation earned over many, many years. The awards we've been lucky enough to receive are another evidence of our reputation. Frontier Software received the coveted gold medal for the Payroll Systems Category in the 2019 HRD Magazine Service Provider Awards. We last won gold in this category in 2017 and silver in 2018.

2. Degree of support offered to clients

What professional services does the vendor offer? Is there a dedicated account manager who is the primary contact for you, ensuring project integrity and a clear communication pathway? Does the vendor offer ancillary services such as training and consulting to support an effective and efficient changeover? Frontier Software offers all this and more.

3. Data Security

What measures are put in place by the vendor to protect your data?

4. Accreditations

What nationally and internationally-recognised accreditations are in place to give you confidence over quality and quality control going forward?

5. Vendor Openness

How open is the vendor to seeking feedback and new ideas? Is this a vendor which values continuous improvement, which actively solicits your opinion and experience in order to benefit you and the next customer? At Frontier Software, we have a policy of re-investing at least 35% of revenue in research, developing enhancements and on staying at the technological edge. In addition, we monitor changes in business practice, technology and legislation and seek input from our user groups.

Measuring Success

How will you know if you've achieved your goals for the upgrade? By setting in place key performance measures for your new recruitment system, you can actively and accurately measure if the system is achieving what you need it to.

This area is covered in more detail in our whitepaper, *Assessing Vendors for Data Security*, available for download from our website.

To find out more information contact us on 1300 555 884
or visit www.frontiersoftware.com

“**Commitment to customer service is our number one priority.**”

Michael Howard, Founder