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Top Trends Shaping the ATS Landscape in 2024

Embracing Change: Transformative Recruiting Trends in 2024

Artificial intelligence (AI) is making a splash as hiring picks up, helping recruiters work more efficiently but raising concerns for some employees and job seekers. Candidates and employees are looking for personalized experiences and consistent, transparent communication. And as companies continue to issue return-to-work mandates, HR teams still need tools and processes to support hybrid and remote workers.

If the last few years weren't evidence enough, it's clear that talent acquisition teams need a full-featured applicant tracking system (ATS) to stay competitive in the unpredictable labor market.

But it's not always easy to keep up with software trends when you're busy strategizing new ways to attract and retain talent.

Whether you're looking for a tech upgrade or buying a brand-new system, it's important to understand how recruiting software has changed and current trends in ATS development. That way, you can be sure you're using both the latest tech tools — and a powerful platform with proven success.

Stay on top of the trends shaping ATS development in 2024 so you can make the right choice and achieve your recruiting goals.



The 2024 Recruiting Landscape and How It's Changed

Since the upheaval of the labor market in 2020, unfamiliar recruiting conditions have become familiar. The extreme uncertainty of that year was followed closely by the Great Resignation, a two-year period when nearly **50 million employees quit** their jobs. In late 2022, the hiring landscape shifted again, marked by layoffs and slowed hiring that continued through 2023. Last year, hiring was also affected by return-to-office (RTO) mandates and higher-than-normal employee burnout.

In 2024, the recruiting landscape is changing yet again. Hiring is expected to increase, with **57% of companies** planning to add permanent jobs. Top candidates are looking for tailored experiences and paying more attention to employee wellness benefits, including flexible work environments as RTO continues. Artificial intelligence (AI) in HR is helping recruiters save time and create the personalized candidate experience people want, but it's raising some concerns for employees and candidates.

As we enter uncharted recruiting territory yet again, you need a modern, efficient ATS to find and hire top talent and exceed candidates' and employees' expectations. Find out more about the trends influencing the evolution of today's ATS software.



2024 Trends in ATS Software

TREND 1

AI and Automation for Recruiting

AI is sweeping the world of work, and now, it's more of a behemoth than a buzzword. Nearly **56% of U.S. workers** say they're using it, and 63% say it's positively impacted their productivity. We're seeing these trends in talent acquisition, too — 60% of HR professionals say they're using **AI and automation in recruiting**. **76% of HR leaders** say they need to use AI or risk getting left behind.

As the technology evolves, it's becoming an increasingly common feature in modern ATS solutions. AI and automation help recruiters get work done faster, provide a better candidate experience, and improve talent acquisition processes.

We can't talk about AI and automation without addressing the risks. Many people are hesitant to see the widespread use of AI, citing concerns about privacy and fairness. AI and automation also raise fears that technology could be replacing jobs. But that won't happen anytime soon — 71% of people are opposed to the use of AI to make final hiring decisions.

Here are some of the ways AI and automation are assisting with hiring tasks:

✓ — **Writing Job Descriptions:** Writing consistent, thorough job descriptions that avoid using jargon or gendered language is no easy task. An AI assistant built into your ATS can help speed up the process. With a few prompts, you can create and edit your job descriptions in a fraction of the time.



Resume Screening: No human can parse resumes and identify potential candidates faster than AI. AI's advanced algorithms swiftly analyze resumes, identifying and matching candidates' key qualifications with job requirements. Your team benefits from a more accurate and objective shortlisting process that ensures the most qualified candidates move forward in the recruitment journey.



Career Site Chatbots: Chatbots on your career site provide consistent, helpful interactions for applicants without requiring your team's time. Chatbots can direct job seekers to suitable job descriptions, answer questions about the application process, and provide information about company culture.



Automated Interview Scheduling: An ATS with automation tools can eliminate the back-and-forth of interview scheduling. Generate an automated link to send with your outreach emails so you can complete screenings faster — and hire great candidates faster, too.



DEIB Enhancement: When used responsibly, AI can help increase diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) in hiring. Its data-driven approach identifies candidates from diverse backgrounds who are often impacted by bias in manual reviews. AI can also help craft job descriptions that are more inclusive, removing gendered and jargon-heavy language that can alienate applicants.



Candidate Communication: We've all spent far too long composing the perfect email — especially recruiters whose goal is to provide a personalized candidate experience. Just like it can assist with writing job descriptions, an ATS with an AI assistant can help you put together the perfect candidate email. Write messages faster than ever without sacrificing the personal touch that's so important for winning top talent.



Engaging Passive Talent: Take the manual work out of talent outreach and engage passive talent pools with automated email drip campaigns. You set your audience, message sequence, text and email delivery method, and schedule. The ATS does the rest, teeing up appropriate follow-up messages, taking action based on the recipient's behavior, and saving recruiters time.



Finding Top Candidates: Start every requisition with a pool of qualified candidates using AI-assisted candidate sourcing tools. Discover new talent and previous applicants who match your needs now. Leverage AI to sift through candidates quickly and surface top matches so you can prioritize your search.



Composing Offer Letters: Write and send error-free, compelling, branded job offers quickly with the help of an AI assistant. Maintain your personalized recruiting approach and get offers sent to top candidates faster than your competition.

Using AI and automation to work more efficiently and gain deeper insight gives you time back in your day — valuable hours your team can use to strategize and focus on the parts of hiring that need a human touch.

69% of HR professionals using hiring automation say it's saving them a significant amount of time.



TREND 2

Personalized Employee Experiences

The employee experience refers to the complete employee lifecycle from when a candidate first interacts with your company until their tenure ends. The employee experience keeps your employees interested in their work, motivates them to do their best, and encourages them to stick around. Unsurprisingly, as hiring remains competitive and the need for retention strategies increases, **75% of HR leaders** cite employee experience and company culture as their top priorities in 2024.

While we treat the candidate experience as its own process, it's really the first part of the employee experience for those who are hired. So, although you might think of an ATS as recruiting software, it can play a vital role in shaping the employee experience — especially in light of HR technology advancements. Applicant tracking systems once served primarily as candidate databases, but today, they're tools recruiters can use to set the stage for the employee journey. The best solutions aren't just for hiring, either. They're part of an integrated talent management platform, an HR tech ecosystem equipped with tools for supporting employees at every stage of their journey. Let's look at how ATS technology is evolving to benefit different parts of the employee experience.

Candidate Experience

An **excellent candidate experience** is the foundation of the employee experience. An unsatisfying experience during the hiring process can lead to candidates rejecting your job offers or accepting them initially, only to turn around and choose a different employer. **75%** of employees who agree they had an excellent experience said it was a significant factor in choosing where they work.

An ATS helps you give candidates everything they want from their candidate experience. Let's take a look at some of the top priorities for job seekers in 2024 and how an ATS can help you exceed their expectations.

- ✓ **Personalization:** A personalized recruiting process tells job seekers they can expect the same as an employee. Create tailored messaging fast with the help of AI for written communication or with targeted email drip campaigns. Your ATS stores all written correspondence in a candidate profile, where hiring teams can access any relevant information about the candidate. After they're hired, kick off a personalized digital onboarding experience with the help of self-service new hire portals. These tools help your talent acquisition team build candidate experiences that feel completely customized without demanding hours of their time to create.
- ✓ **Transparency:** Job seekers want transparency during the hiring process. They want to know how many interviews are on the horizon, their application status, the role responsibilities, and the salary. You can use your ATS to increase transparency. It can provide detailed information about the role, perform salary comparisons, and help you write candidate emails faster than humanly possible with AI.
- ✓ **Speed:** The faster your hiring process, the happier your candidates will be — **62% of candidates** lose interest if you take more than two weeks to get back to them. But most companies aren't **speeding up the hiring process**: average time-to-hire increased by one full day last year, up to 44 days. With an ATS, you can track your company's time-to-hire metrics, gain insight into anything slowing it down, and take steps to remove bottlenecks.

72% of candidates need to understand company culture before accepting a job offer.

Onboarding Experience

New hires are still evaluating your company and deciding whether or not they'll stay in their new role — 20% quit within their first 45 days of employment. An ATS that's part of an integrated talent acquisition platform simplifies the transition from candidate to employee and enables greater engagement at this critical point in their journey.

Check out some of the ways an integrated ATS supports an excellent onboarding experience:

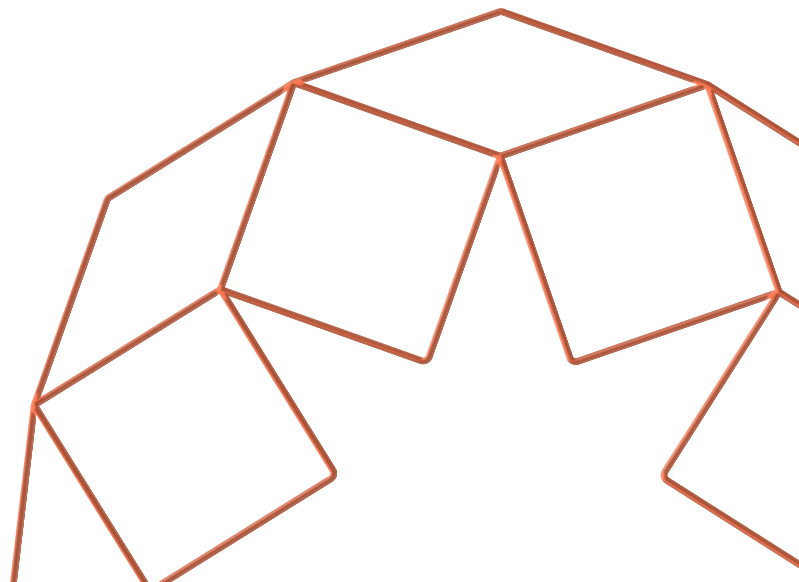
- ✓ **Seamless Transition for Employees and HR:** When candidates become employees, there's often lots of work to do to enter them into your systems. With an integrated ATS, transferring candidate information and giving them access to software programs takes just a few clicks. You'll save tons of time, reduce frustration, and eliminate errors that are inevitable with manual data entry.
- ✓ **Creates Structure:** Transparency is top-of-mind for candidates and employees, and an integrated ATS keeps processes transparent as onboarding kicks off. You'll be able to clearly communicate the next steps of the process to your new hires, and thanks to internal task-tracking tools, your HR team won't miss a single step.
- ✓ **Sparks Engagement:** Integrated talent acquisition tools make it easier to build connections and spark engagement among your new hires. They can use the self-service portal to complete onboarding tasks and to get to know their new team members. Add team introductions to the portal as well as resources for learning about company culture so new hires feel connected to their team and the company right away — a must for employee engagement.

Performance and Engagement

Effective performance management and engagement strategies are closely connected and critical for an outstanding employee experience. Employees agree that a great experience includes frequent feedback, growth opportunities, and regular recognition for their work. They're more engaged when they talk about performance often, have advancement opportunities, and hear more "thank yous" from their managers.

You can leverage your performance and engagement data to inform hiring strategies when your ATS is part of an integrated talent management system. Thanks to performance reviews and robust reporting, you'll better understand what makes employees successful at your company so you can hire candidates whose skills and experience align. You can even use onboarding surveys to catch early signs of low engagement and address concerns as soon as they come up.

With continuous feedback, you'll gain insight into problems or opportunities much faster. You can help your employees improve in real time and use what you learn to attract more new hires. Every job seeker wants to work at a company where they can grow their skills and have their voices heard.



TREND 3

Support for Remote and Hybrid Workers

Return-to-work orders were rampant in 2023 — **51% of employers mandated RTO**, with many requiring their employees to come into the office five days a week. But remote employees **resoundingly opposed** the mandates, citing the time (about one hour per day) and money (up to \$10,000 per year) they save working from home. **63% of workers** say the option to work remotely is more important to them than other factors, including salary, flexible schedules, work-life balance, or having a good boss.

Although some companies used RTO to decrease headcount and avoid layoffs, many lost more employees than anticipated. 56% of employees know someone who has quit or plans to quit because of RTO. Employers are paying attention — even though 90% of companies say they'll enforce RTO this year, few will require employees to be in-office full-time. Most are introducing hybrid work schedules, requiring just one to three days a week in-office.

As employees continue to assert their preference for remote and hybrid work, companies offering this perk will have an advantage over their competitors. They'll have an even bigger advantage if they're using an ATS to support remote talent acquisition efforts. As remote work has risen over the past few years, ATS software has evolved to support recruiters and employees in remote work environments.

ATS Features for Remote Hiring

Today, ATS providers continue to enhance their feature toolkits to support remote hiring and onboarding. Here's what to look for in an ATS built for remote and hybrid teams:



Text Messaging Tools: Text messaging is essential when your candidates and employees are in different locations. With texting tools, communication between recruiters and candidates is faster than ever, which helps speed up the hiring process. You can also send out mass texts to a segment of your employee or the entire workforce to keep everyone in the loop.



Integrations With Top Tech Tools: An ATS designed for remote and hybrid teams will integrate with the tech tools you use for recruiting, including LinkedIn, Indeed, Zoom, Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet. These integrations simplify many recruiting tasks, including candidate sourcing, management, outreach, interview scheduling, and interviewing.



Virtual Interview Toolkit: Virtual interview tools are essential for remote recruiting teams who want to hire remote candidates. With virtual interview scheduling, coordinating hiring team schedules with the candidate is automated, a breeze for everyone involved. You can enable video interview responses for faster screening, inviting candidates to answer some questions with a recorded video response. With interview guides, notes, and scorecards, hiring teams can easily collaborate on interview feedback and hiring decisions.



Self-Service Employee Portal: Joining a remote team doesn't have to be intimidating or disorganized. With a self-service employee portal, it's far easier to give remote workers a customized onboarding experience and access to all the resources they need. It's a place where they can virtually meet their colleagues and get a feel for company culture. The employee portal is a vital tool for keeping employees connected no matter where they are.

TREND 4

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)

After a surge in DEIB initiatives in 2020, trends indicate that companies are pulling back some of their efforts. **15% of employers** did not offer DEIB programs in 2020, a number that jumped to 20% in 2023. Hiring for DEIB roles **fell 48%** from 2022 to 2023, and layoffs disproportionately affected those roles.

Despite these trends, just **1% of C-suite executives report** reduced DEIB spending, with 57% saying they've actually increased their efforts. According to the *New York Times*, many companies are simply changing the way they talk about DEIB, framing it as a push for equity in promotional opportunities or baking it into other initiatives like sustainability. No matter how you're doing it, there's no reason to back down from your DEIB commitments, according to HR experts like Josh Bersin. Aside from the known benefits when companies prioritize DEIB, like increased innovation and revenue, DEIB still matters to employees — **81% of adults** say corporate America should reflect the country's diversity.

As corporate investments in DEI decline, I believe it's time to do away with the "DEI police" in HR and focus on embedding the principles of inclusion, fair pay, and open-minded discussions in every business unit.

Josh Bersin

HR Expert & Analyst

ATS Features Supporting DEIB

ATS software providers are enhancing their product and adding new tools to support DEIB:



AI and Automation: Though AI and automation pose some risks for diversity in hiring, there are far more tools for increasing DEIB. AI assistants can help remove language from job posts and messages that may alienate your candidates. Automated candidate matching can surface top candidates based purely on skills and experience. Your ATS should also track the actual diversity of your candidates and new hires to help you uphold your commitments.



Interview Guides and Scorecards: Increase fairness and reduce bias in hiring when your ATS provides interview guides and scorecards. These tools ensure candidates are asked the same questions during interviews and are evaluated according to the same standards as their competition. Scorecards help increase fairness in candidate scoring, giving interviewers set criteria on which to base their scores.



Compensation Benchmarking: Ensure you're paying every employee in line with market rates easily when your ATS offers compensation benchmarking tools. This also helps you improve pay transparency by giving you a salary range that you can add to job descriptions to attract the best-fit candidates.



DEIB Reports: Find out if your DEIB strategy actually works with in-depth reports. The best ATS software gives you access to a variety of reports, including DEIB reports, so you can monitor the diversity of your talent pools and ensure you're hiring candidates from a variety of backgrounds. You can also use reports to track and improve pay equity.

70% of companies that list pay ranges in job posts say it's **increased their applicant volume**. 66% say it has increased the quality of applicants, too.

How To Find the Right ATS

A modern ATS doesn't just benefit applicants and new hires. Its ability to facilitate consistent, personalized, speedy hiring processes is a huge advantage for your recruiting team as they compete to hire and retain top talent. A comprehensive solution with cutting-edge features can help hiring teams understand what attracts candidates to your company and how to hire people who are in it for the long haul. That's why you need to find the right ATS for your business.

Here are 11 questions to ask to determine if your ATS solution is the right fit:

1. Does this ATS fit my company profile?
2. Is this ATS user-friendly?
3. Does this ATS create a positive candidate experience?
4. Does this ATS have robust reporting and analytics capabilities?
5. Does this ATS offer mobile and texting tools?
6. Does this ATS have AI and automation capabilities?
7. Does this ATS have digital onboarding, including tools like built-in background checks?
8. Does this ATS offer employee referral management?
9. Does this ATS offer dedicated customer support?
10. Can I evaluate this ATS via customer reviews, software demos, and other resources?
11. Is this ATS scalable?

Make a choice for a new ATS with confidence with ClearCo's **ATS Buyer's Checklist**.

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