

The Complete ATS Buyer's Checklist

Time-to-hire is trending down again after a recent uptick, but it's still 41 days — and it only takes candidates two weeks to lose interest in a role if you don't reach out. Not to mention, you're busy scouring formerly reliable candidate sources, searching for elusive skilled workers, only to lose them to companies with faster hiring processes.

It's time to up your recruiting game with a new [Applicant Tracking System \(ATS\)](#). Automate HR workflows and streamline recruiting so you can find the best candidates possible and hire them faster. An ATS is invaluable for your HR team, saving them hours with automation and artificial intelligence (AI) enhancements. An ATS with advanced talent analytics tools extracts recruiting insights from your people data instantly so you can make informed decisions.

Use our quick checklist as you search for an ATS to find the right software solution for your company now and in the future.

Check out our [ATS Buyer's Guide](#) for more detailed information on how to choose the best ATS for your business.

[Get the Guide](#)

Does this ATS fit my company profile?

When 94% of recruiting and hiring professionals say [using an ATS has positively impacted](#) their hiring process, you know it's a smart move to imitate. The challenge is finding the right software to give your recruiting strategy a leg up in the competition for top talent and help you retain new and tenured employees.

Your company's needs and priorities are unique, so be sure your vendor has experience working with companies that fit your company's profile — industry, size, hiring needs, etc.

Does this ATS satisfy my company's specific needs and goals?

Yes No

Is this ATS user-friendly?

Your ATS will be used by many different people in your organization, including recruiters, HR teams, and hiring managers. If the system is too complex, your employees are more likely to misuse or abandon it altogether. That leads to wasted resources, frustrated employees, and extra work to sort out the mess.

Software that is user-friendly, intuitive, and easy to learn will be far more beneficial to your team. Be sure that each person using the software can navigate it with minimal effort by including a variety of users in software demos. Ask vendors whether they provide training for your team when the software is implemented.

Is this ATS intuitive and easy to use?

Yes No

Does this ATS create a positive candidate experience?

50% of candidates say they have rejected a job offer after a bad candidate experience. In comparison, 75% of those who had an excellent experience say it influenced their decision to accept the job offer. Poor candidate experience is due to factors like long applications, drawn-out interview processes, and a need for more communication from recruiters.

Be sure to demo both sides of the software and ensure that the candidate UX is just as easy to navigate and applications don't take too much of the candidate's time to complete. Demo candidate experience features for HR, like tools for creating job descriptions and applications and candidate communication tools like text messaging and interview scheduling.

Does this ATS have tools to help my team create an excellent candidate experience?

Yes

No

Does this ATS have advanced reporting and analytics capabilities?

Great recruiters know you can't improve if you don't know how you're doing. Reporting and analytics capabilities are a must in a useful ATS today. You can track what's happening with your recruiting processes, set goals based on those metrics, and measure your goal progress. The best ATS solutions offer custom reports and dashboards that give you a birds'-eye, real-time view of your most important metrics at all times.

Leading ATS systems leverage AI to make it easier than ever for your HR and talent acquisition teams to learn from your data. The most robust analytics tools allow you to ask data-related questions — e.g., 'How many candidates are interviewed, on average, before a hiring decision is made?' — to uncover hidden insights effortlessly. You can even keep everyone in the loop with shareable, interactive dashboards that are always up-to-date.

Ask your vendor about their options for tailored reports and dashboards for a quick look at your metrics, the system's AI capabilities, and report shareability to ensure it can meet your needs now and as technology continues to evolve.

Can the vendor show live reporting examples?

Yes

No

Can I create custom reports tailored to my company's specific needs?

Yes

No

Can I build dashboards to monitor my ATS metrics?

Yes

No

Are the system's analytics and reporting tools leveraging AI to make them more useful and powerful?

Yes

No

Are reports and data visualizations easy to share with colleagues and in presentations?

Yes

No

Are there any additional costs for reporting and analytics?

Yes

No

Does this ATS offer mobile and texting tools?

An ATS that offers mobile and texting tools gives it a competitive advantage in your search, considering that most candidates ([over 90%](#)) are searching for jobs and submitting applications on their phones. Recruiters who text their candidates say their response rate has increased by [up to 50%](#) over email.

Be sure to choose an ATS that offers these features, then ask about similar clients' success after implementing the mobile and texting tools the ATS provides.

Are your job applications mobile-friendly?

Yes No

Can applicants apply via text message?

Yes No

Can recruiters communicate with candidates via text?

Yes No

Does this ATS have AI and automation capabilities?

[56% of HR professionals](#) using AI say it's saving them three hours per day, and [69% of those using hiring automation](#) say it's saving them time. Faster time-to-hire depends on speeding up hiring processes; AI and automation can help your team do just that.

Ask ATS vendors about automated workflows and AI-enhanced tools available in their platforms. Ask about their plans for development and address privacy concerns, too.

Does the ATS offer automated workflows, like automated emails or reminders for recruiters and candidates?

Yes No

Does the ATS offer AI-assisted candidate sourcing and talent ranking or matching?

Yes No

Is the ATS leveraging AI as a writing assistant for job descriptions and emails?

Yes No

Does the ATS have plans to increase the use of AI and automation in the platform?

Yes No

Does this ATS have digital onboarding?

Digital onboarding is a time-saving tool for new hires and HR teams, eliminating the need to manually complete, review, and file hiring paperwork. It saves time and makes the process easier for new employees and HR.

Ask the vendor to demonstrate the paperless onboarding process and take note of whether the ATS has crucial features like digital signatures, built-in background checks, and bulk onboarding. These essential features allow HR teams to onboard faster, reduce data entry tasks, and keep employee records consistent and accurate.

Does this ATS allow new hires to sign paperwork digitally?

Yes No

Does this ATS include built-in background checks?

Yes No



Does this ATS offer employee referral management?

Recruiters can leverage the entire workforce to fill open positions and make quality referrals. Referrals are the top source for quality external hiring, with referred candidates performing better and staying at their jobs longer. They're also [hired 13 days faster](#), on average.

Be sure that the ATS features include referral management and tracking for the recruiting team.

How can I manage employee referrals with this ATS?

Yes No

Does this ATS offer dedicated customer support?

24/7 support chats and a complete online knowledge library for troubleshooting are a start, but a dedicated support team is crucial to getting the full value from an ATS. Check the ratings and reviews to see what clients have to say about support capabilities, and be sure to ask about support fees.

Do different packages come with different service levels?

Yes No

Will my team have a dedicated support contact?

Yes No

Are there any extra costs for customer support?

Yes No

Can I evaluate this ATS via customer reviews, software demos, and other resources?

It's important to get a complete look at what it's like to use the ATS before making a decision, so be sure to get opinions from more than just the software rep.

To create a list of potential vendors, read customer reviews, demo the platforms, and read through any marketing materials to help assist your decision. Then, go through this checklist for each contender and find the platform that best suits your needs.

Have I done thorough research on the ATS?

Yes No



Is this ATS scalable?

An excellent hiring and onboarding process helps bring great candidates into your organization, but you can't stop there if you want to retain that top talent. Measuring employee engagement and reviewing performance regularly are important components of employee retention. A complete [talent management platform](#) that offers tools like employee engagement surveys and performance reviews is important if you plan to enhance employee retention strategies.

Ask vendors if their ATS is part of a larger talent management ecosystem. If so, ask about the cost of upgrading to a full-platform solution. Get a demo of employee survey and performance review tools to be sure your team can launch successful surveys and review cycles and ask about workforce planning capabilities.

Is the ATS part of a more extensive talent management system that includes tools for employee performance, engagement, and workforce planning?

Yes No

Does this ATS offer additional employee engagement resources, like custom surveys or recognition tools?

Yes No

Does this ATS allow my team to manage employee performance with solutions like performance reviews?

Yes No

Get the ClearCompany ATS Buyer's Guide for even more tips on getting executive buy-in, determining must-have ATS features, and more.

[Get the Guide](#)