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Your Complete Applicant Tracking System Buyer's Checklist

Choosing the ATS that makes sense for your recruiting team and their candidates is a decision that requires a little insider knowledge. This is an investment that needs the right features, functionality and support, in order to be effective. It's no small decision, but – with the help of our clients - we've boiled it down to a small list!

It's easy to get overwhelmed with this decision and this list is designed to be your go-to, must-have, ATS essentials buyer's guide. Let us take the guesswork and sales pressure off of your software choice, and assist you in finding the technology that will deliver.

DOES THIS ATS FIT MY COMPANY PROFILE?

It's estimated that about 50% of all mid-sized companies and almost all large corporations use some type of ATS...that doesn't mean they're using the same one.

Your company of 2,000 employees doesn't have the same needs as a small - or even mid-sized company, nor will it have the same needs as a staffing company. Be sure that your vendor has experience working with companies that fit your profile.

Does this ATS fit my company profile?   Y   N
                                                          ●   ●

COULD MY 4TH GRADER USE IT?

The number two reason that organizations decide to leave their ATS is because their current system is too complex. That equates to a lot of wasted company resources, and employee frustration.

Everyone in your office is going to have a different comfort level with new technology. Be sure that each person using the software can navigate it effortlessly; otherwise, they won't use it.

Can each person using the software navigate it effortlessly?   Y   N
                                                                ●   ●

DOES THIS SOFTWARE CREATE A CANDIDATE-FRIENDLY EXPERIENCE?

42% of candidates who had a bad experience with a company will never seek employment there again.

Your candidates will not stick around for a bad application experience. Be sure to demo both sides of the software and ensure that the candidate side is easy to navigate, and doesn't take too much of the candidate's time.

Does this software create a user-friendly experience?   Y   N

SHOW ME THE REPORTS...

Great recruiters know that you can't improve upon what you can't measure, making reporting a must in any ATS. Check out their reporting tools and find out exactly what metrics you can receive reports on like, source of hire, time to fill, diversity and retention. Again, ask about any associated costs with reporting, and if they can be tailored to your specific needs.

Did you see live reporting examples?   Y   N

Can the reports be tailored to your specific needs?   Y   N

Do you understand any associated costs?   Y   N

SOCIAL SHARING AND JOB POSTING SHOULD BE A BREEZE

92% of U.S. companies are using social networks and media to find talent. Find out what social and job posting sites you will have access to through the ATS, and ask about all costs and discounts up front. Also, go through the posting and sharing process. Be sure that it is simple, effective, and takes little training.

Will the job posting tools save you time?   Y   N

Can the software easily share to social media sites that your team needs?   Y   N

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DOES YOUR SUPPORT ACTUALLY SUPPORT? REALLY?

So they've got 24/7 support and a complete online knowledge library for troubleshooting –it's pointless if their information and staff are sub-par. Check the ratings and reviews for their support and be sure to iron out all support fees.

Do different packages come with different service levels?   Y   N
                                                                   ○   ○

Do you think your entire team will be able to receive
the help they need, when they need it?   Y   N
                                                                   ○   ○

Do you understand any associated costs?   Y   N
                                                                   ○   ○

WHAT ABOUT INTEGRATION?

At the very least, your ATS must be able to integrate with your career site. Most systems offer several options for this, so make sure to dig into which would work best for you.

The larger your organization, the more other systems will need to be integrated. Find how quickly and easily you can pair payroll or other internal systems with applicant tracking. Ask for specific time frames, resources and costs.

Will the ATS be able to work with your current career site?   Y   N
                                                                   ○   ○

CANDIDATE AND REFERRAL PORTALS ARE A MUST

Referrals are the top source of external hire, accounting for 24.5% of hires. Referral programs and internal hires are huge opportunities for great, cost-effective talent sources.

Recruiters often need the help of the entire workforce to fill inside positions and make quality referrals. Be sure that their features include referral management and tracking for the recruiting team.

Do you have candidate and referral portals?   Y   N
                                                                   ○   ○
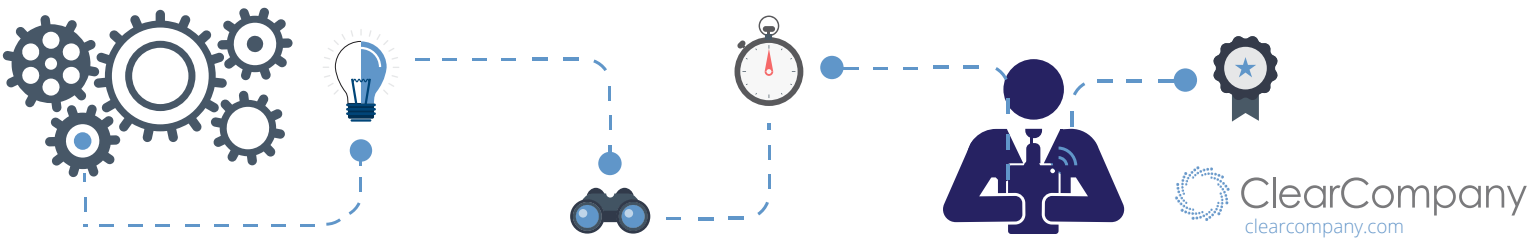
INCLUDE YOUR TEAM.

Ask questions, gather feedback, boil down the essentials and create your ATS wish list. You might not get it all, but you will have at least prioritized your team's needs.

Recruiting pro, Randal Birkwood suggests having an internal recruiter, an IT professional and a hiring manager included in your ATS decision team.

Has your team chimed in?   Y   N

DEMOS, REVIEWS, AND RESOURCES ARE HUGE.

Read the reviews, go through this checklist and then create a list of vendors that suit your needs. When decision makers don't do their research before entering the demo phase, they can lose patience, and end up settling on a vendor that isn't ideal for their needs.

Remember, the goal of an ATS is to support your recruiting team AND your candidates. A poor ATS decision can actually end up doing damage to your team, and frustrating your candidates. Use this resource to make the decision making process simple, quick and efficient...just like your ATS should be.

Did you read the reviews, go through this checklist, create   Y   N
a list of vendors that suit your needs, and research?

SOURCES

1) SearchCIO
http://searchcio.techtarget.com/definition/applicant-tracking-system

2) Software Advice
http://www.softwareadvice.com/hr/applicant-tracking-software-comparison/?layout=var_r

3) Careerbuilder
http://www.careerbuilder.com/share/aboutus/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?sd=2%2F20%2F2013&id=pr740&ed=12%2F31%2F2013

5) Jobvite
http://recruiting.jobvite.com/company/press-releases/2012/jobvite-social-recruiting-survey-2012/

8) CareerXroads
http://www.ere.net/2013/03/22/source-of-hire-report-referrals-career-sites-job-boards-dominate/

9) Randal Kirkwood (ERE)
http://www.ere.net/2013/05/21/the-17-things-to-think-about-before-picking-an-applicant-tracking-system/