The ALEX® HR Tech Purchasing Cheat Sheet
(For Companies of Every Size)

Not sure what kind of tech stack* your company should probably have? HR technology expert and conference speaker Tim Sackett provides his recommendations for small companies (under 1,000 employees); mid-sized companies (1,001 to 5,000 employees); and enterprise companies (5,001 or more employees).

HR Tech Stack by Business Size

Small	Mid-Size	Enterprise
HRIS Payroll Talent Acquisition (ATS)	HRIS Payroll Talent Acquisition (ATS)	HRIS Payroll Talent Acquisition (ATS)
	Benefits HR Analytics Onboarding Performance Management Rewards & Recognition Sourcing	Benefits HR Analytics Onboarding Performance Management Rewards & Recognition Sourcing
		Compensation HRIS LMS Payroll Succession Wellness

*No, a "tech stack" is not a tasty breakfast special down at Grumpy Joe's IT Pancake House and Waffle Emporium. It's what IT professionals like to call the combination of every piece of technology you use to do your job. Your HRIS system is part of your tech stack, as is the website you use to pull compensation data. In fact, if you use Microsoft Excel, that's part of your tech stack too.

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Notes for Small Businesses

Many small businesses feel they can't afford HR technology. So instead of going out and spending $10-20,000 per year on a full tech stack, they'll go and hire a third party to help them do it manually for $35,000, plus benefits! If you're in the small business category, do yourself a favor by investing in solid technology that allows you to build a process that is consistently repeatable for your organization.

Notes for Mid-Size Businesses

If you're a medium-sized company, you might find yourself purchasing suite-level technologies. As your tech stack becomes larger it becomes extremely hard to manage these technologies across multiple systems from non-connected companies. It doesn't mean it can't be done, and almost all of these vendors will tell you how great they are at working with your other vendors. But make sure to investigate that closely.

Notes for Enterprise-Level Businesses

At the enterprise level, you'll have fewer choices for HR technology, not more. The complexity of the enterprise-level HR tech stack is off the charts, and using multiple HRIS systems, multiple ATS systems, and a variety of add-on software is not unheard of, especially for organizations juggling the needs of acquired companies that don't want to give up the technology they already have.

Bonus Tips for Vetting HR Vendors

1 Sounds obvious, but don't buy anything without looking at least a few competing products; you'll thank yourself later.

2 Always ask for the "full" cost not only of the product, but of the implementation costs as well.

3 Ask vendors for talking points you can use when you pitch the people holding the purse strings at your company. And make that pitch with conviction—using the PowerPoint presentation advice here.

4 Require a vendor to provide three types of references: a current client who loves the vendor, a current client going through implementation, and a past client who left you. Yeah, they'll be reluctant to cough up the last one, but I won't buy a technology from a vendor that refuses to give it to me.

For much more information and insight about assessing and buying new HR technology, download The Ultimate Guide to Getting the HR Tech Right for Your Company now.