The new HR software buyer's guide

Navigating the digital future

BUYERS GUIDE

"The game-changer for businesses today is the digitalization of the HR function, if leaders get it right. The pace of innovation and the stability of tried and tested HR software solutions are driving a radical change in how 'HR work' gets done."

**EY**

Eight forces driving HR transformation

The opportunity for HR

HR professionals across every business sector and size are under more pressure than ever before. Not just in juggling the day-to-day demands of their role, but also the longer-term needs of the business.

The COVID pandemic has been the catalyst for a huge shift in the professional landscape. It's not only turning the world of work upside down for huge numbers of people, but it's also contributed to seismic shifts in what people want from their jobs, employers and careers.

As a result, HR is being pushed to take on a larger role in helping organisations to be online first and meet the demands of a workforce who want to work their way, and on their terms.

Meeting those challenges however starts with the digital transformation of HR, as HR leaders explore new technologies, platforms, and ways of working to meet the expectations of a post-pandemic workforce.
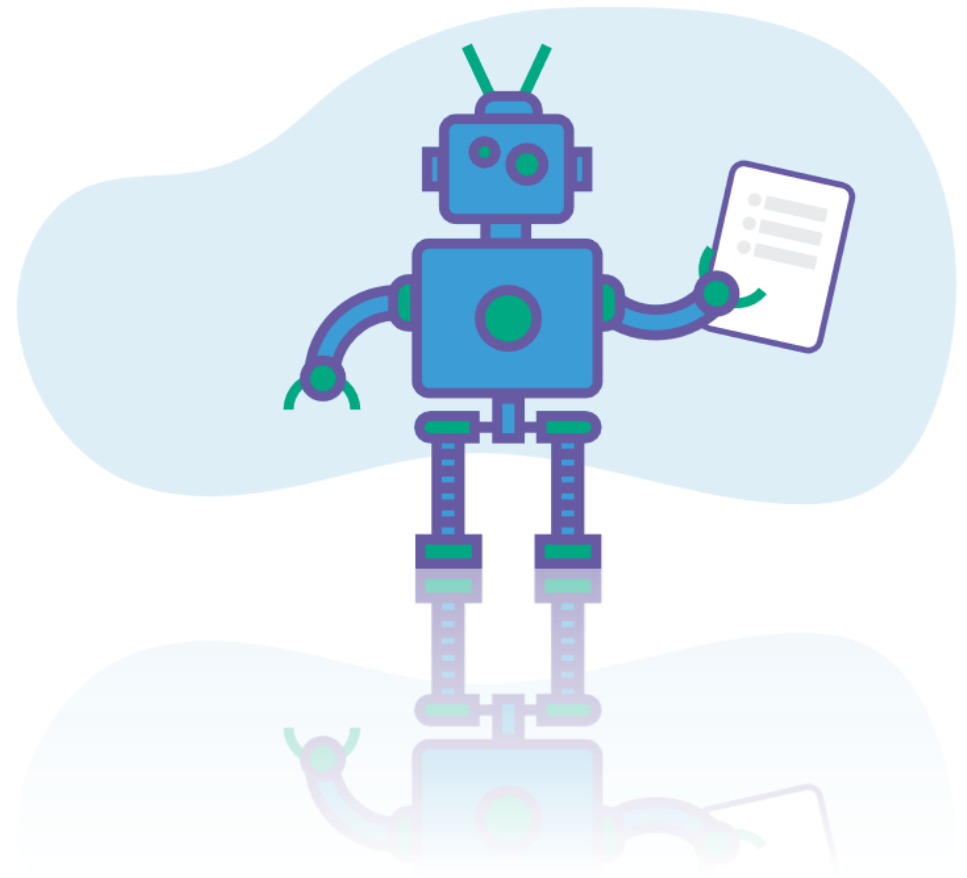
"You can no longer run HR without a serious focus on technology, and the options for HR Tech are more confusing than ever. We are now more than ten years into the "cloud HCM revolution", and the shift from process-based systems to Systems of Experience has been disruptive."

Josh Bersin

Reinventing Work, Reinventing HR, Reinventing Ourselves

Navigating the digital future

To help them take on this challenge, HR professionals are ditching outdated systems and excel spreadsheets in favour of more cost-effective, engaging and sustainable digital, Cloud HR solutions.

But, with HR software systems going through a period of massive change, selecting the right system for today and tomorrow is far from simple.

This guide highlights the six key areas to consider in order to ensure your HR system takes you, and your workforce, where you want to go.

1.INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION

"As the organization of the future takes shape, HR will be the driving force for many initiatives: mapping talent to value; making the workforce more flexible; prioritizing strategic workforce planning, performance management, and reskilling; building an HR platform; and developing an HR tech ecosystem"

McKinsey & Company

The new possible: How HR can help build the organization of the future

In HR, it's far too easy to get buried in admin. Hours are wasted trawling through spreadsheets to validate or update information and chasing up overdue forms. Centralising data and automating processes immediately frees HR from everyday administration, and boosts data accuracy and compliance.

HR systems need to be sophisticated enough to cope with the complexities of how processes operate in real-life. For example, a system that automatically routes a holiday request for approval needs to have the flexibility to handle a situation where multiple approvers are involved, or approvers are on holiday themselves.

Reminders about key compliance issues, such as right-to-work checks or mandatory re-certification, need to be underpinned by rules that trigger different notifications to different people depending on individual processes and levels of sensitivity or urgency.

What to look for:

☑ **Plug and play automation,** fully integrated into your HR system

☑ **Option to easily tailor** different approval scenarios, notifications and reminders for different processes or org units

☑ **Flexibility** to incorporate multi-stage, multi-step reviews and notifications

☑ **Email integration**, including the option to approve from email where appropriate

☑ **Freedom** to define your own email messages

2. ENHANCED EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

"The role that HR will play in realizing significant business outcomes is going to be vital. And driving a better, more agile approach through the organization will demand an HR department that reinforces the organization's commitment to agile while refusing to drain managers' resources, energy and focus."

Gallup

HR Must Reinvent the Employee Experience

For many of us, the real opportunity to create long-term value from HR software lies in a 'people-first' approach.

Used well, HR systems can build trust and engagement. Used poorly, and employees may feel that their data is being used to control and not support them. That's because your HR system sends out a message to employees that 'this is how we do stuff around here'.

Instead of thinking of an HR system as a tool to gather and process employee data, think of how it could help you to build trust and engagement; facilitate change and growth and support culture and collaboration – all in a post-pandemic working world.

Questions to ask

☑ **Recruitment:** what is the ideal candidate journey?

☑ **Onboarding:** how do you engage new joiners before they start?

☑ **Empowerment**: what information do employees and managers want, and how can an HR system help them do their jobs better?

☑ **Workspaces:** can you enable easier collaboration across business units, divisions and countries?

☑ **Communication:** how do you want to share information, invite feedback and start conversations?

☑ **Check-ins:** is it important to facilitate conversations between employees and their managers?

☑ **Development:** how do you want to help employees grow?

☑ **Flexible/remote-working:** does it matter where employees work?

☑ **Brand engagement:** can your choice in HR system reflect your own brand's unique identity, enhancing crucial user engagement?

3. AGILE IMPLEMENTATION
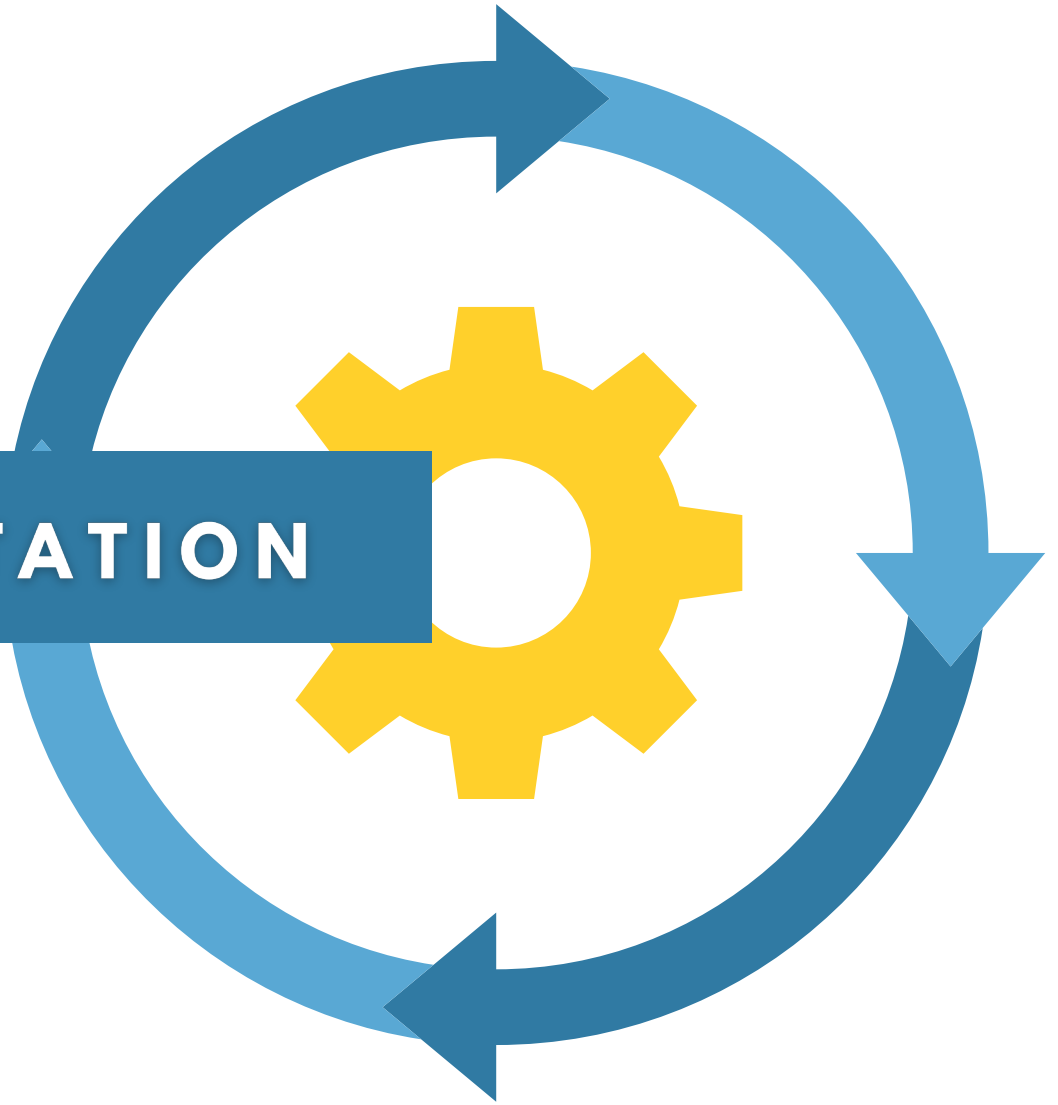
Very few HR teams can justify the time and expense involved in implementation projects that span many months, sucking up valuable HR time and costing tens of thousands of pounds before there is any return on investment.

Older systems, which are costly to implement and update because they've been customised for years, are losing out to newer solutions developed from the ground up to run 'in the Cloud'. Long-winded and expensive implementation projects are giving way to an approach that is focused on taking the pain, and the cost, away from the customer.

Purposely designed to put power in the hands of the HR professionals, these systems typically combine smart data upload tools with rapid provisioning and flexible configuration (and re-configuration) to reflect individual customer requirements.

What to look for:

☑ **Fast set up service**, backed by a proven methodology

☑ **Data upload** utility that makes transferring your data from spreadsheets or older HR systems as pain-free as possible

☑ **Easy-to-use configuration** options so you can take control of the way your system works (including, security roles, org structures, locations, field names, forms, process flows, reports etc)

☑ **Open API for integration** with third-party solutions

☑ **Dedicated project manager,** so you have continuity during set up

4. FUTURE-PROOFED HR
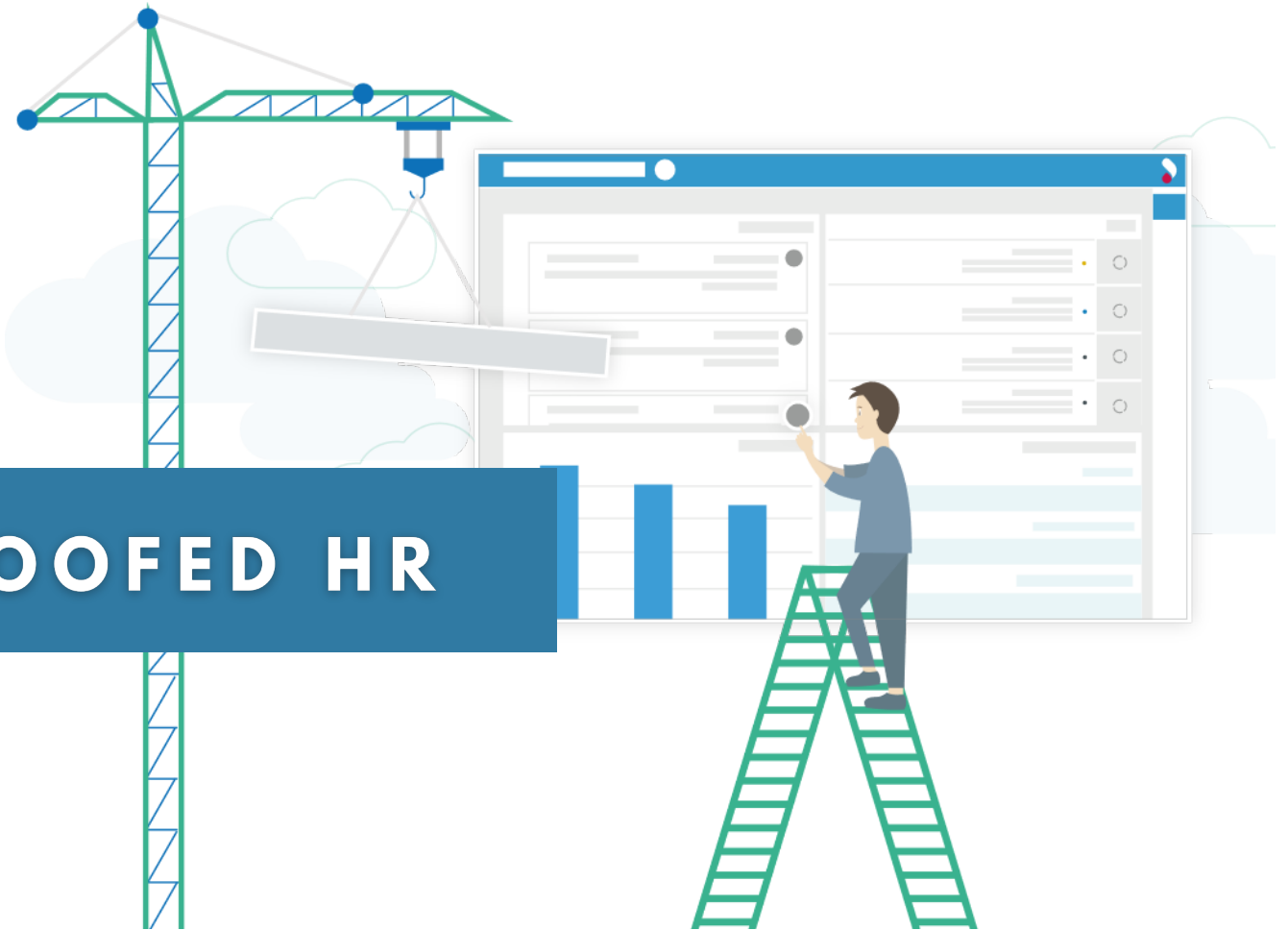
"A vast majority of HR leaders (95%) expect that at least some of their employees will work remotely after the pandemic. This shift to hybrid work will be a massive driver of transformation, and one HR leaders must be prepared to support."

Gartner

Top 5 HR Trends and Priorities for 2022

In the face of changing legislation, working practices and post-pandemic and Brexit economic realities, one of the biggest reasons to modernise your HR system is to ensure you have a platform that can flex and grow with you.

Selecting a system that is agile and adaptable allows you to move faster, adopt new ways of working, stay more competitive, and avoid unnecessary costs. There is nothing worse than having to go to the board to ask for money to modify a report simply to reflect a legislative change, or to redesign a workflow or performance process.

Other considerations for future-proofing your HR solution is the scalability of the underlying architecture (just how easy is it to add new offices, locations, employees or modules), and how updates are delivered.

Look for a system that offers:

✅ **Seamless scalability,** so you can add (or remove) employees, managers, departments, business units, security roles etc, whenever you want without involving the vendor

✅ **Accessible configuration** tools that let you adapt the system around different working practices without IT or vendor involvement

✅ **Automatic updates** free of charge, so you always have the latest features and never get left behind

✅ **Agile Cloud-infrastructure** based on a multi-tenant architecture

✅ **Global capabilities** that help you adhere to local requirements, wherever in the world your employees are

✅ **Deep dive data analytics** that help you see data-derived alerts, trends and predictions that allows for better decision making

5. DATA CERTAINTY

"In 2022, HR will play a key role in how the company addresses cybersecurity. HR will also communicate the company's cybersecurity policies and procedures, and educate employees on reporting practices."

Forbes

4 Top HR Trends And Predictions For 2022

It goes without saying that accurate, accessible and secure data is at the heart of an effective HR function.

Today's workflow-driven HR systems go beyond making it simpler to collect, manage and secure data. They provide the opportunity to align critical processes and people.

Embedded document management with e-signature makes it simple for HR to distribute, track and update policies, workspaces and HR portals allow important information to be shared easily, and task management helps orchestrate complex activities, such as security reviews.

And, with HR data comes significant added responsibilities, so it is vital your system provides the advanced security needed to assure legislative compliance and protect against reputational risk.

What to look for:

☑ **Comprehensive GDPR-compliant HR database** with depth and breadth

☑ **In-built validation and approval** to assure data accuracy and integrity

☑ **Straight-forward document management** with e-signatures

☑ **Embedded reporting and analytics** that protects data based on your security roles

☑ **Advanced security,** independently tested and certified (e.g. penetration testing and ISO27001)

☑ **Tools to assist with GDPR:** for example, to delete or anonymise selected data at specific times

"3 in 5 believe that the HR function will rapidly become irrelevant if it doesn't modernize its approach to understanding and planning for the future needs of the workforce"

KPMG

The Future of HR

6. MAKING SENSE OF DATA

"With an efficient implementation of big data, HR departments can better manage the talent under their purview."

Forbes Human Resources Council

Nine Benefits Of Embracing Big Data In Human Resources

HR Analytics (or People Analytics) is hugely important in a data-driven world.

Good quality HR analytics can assist business leaders and HR teams build truer pictures of their historic, present and future workforce data – ultimately leading to more informed decision making and better business outcomes.

With the right analytical tools, your organisation can easily identify patterns in your data, and then investigate the underlying data from different angles in an easy and intuitive way. When you can readily visualise patterns and trends, you can start asking the questions needed to understand **why** the patterns and trends exist.

In addition, HR analytical tools will allow you to create reports that are not only data-intensive and accurate, but also visually engaging – making it much easier for HR teams to present data that is easier to understand, and creates real impact.

What to look for:

✅ **Deep-dive data analytics** that include pre-configured reports, dashboards and metrics that you can build on

✅ **Personalised dashboards** for each associated HR user

✅ **Straight-forward natural language queries** that use familiar business terms to generate meaningful results

✅ **Easy-to-use** report generation and scheduling

✅ **Management reporting** that reflects your own brand's identity

Time for change

Give the demands being made on HR today, achieving HR ambitions without the support of a modern HR system is going to be increasingly difficult, if not impossible.

Historic barriers to purchasing HR software - typically time and money - no longer exist. Sophisticated, configurable HR solutions are available at a fraction of the price of their older siblings, and rarely require more than a six-month commitment.

With no expensive set up services or maintenance, or long-term contracts, they provide a fast, effective and low risk route to digital future, liberating you and your colleagues from time-wasting admin and helping HR teams to better engage, motivate and understand their workforce.

Get your HR software selection check list now.

The questions to you need to ask today to be sure your HR system is fit for the future.

DOWNLOAD NOW

Tranform HR today

With thousands of HR professionals trusting our HR software every day, Cezanne HR is the system choice for mid-sized and growing UK and international organisations.

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"Terrific customer service paired with great value for money and intuitive utilisation."

Software Advice.

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

"Easy to use. There are a lot of options. Helps me in my everyday tasks"

Capterra

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

"Intuitive, thorough, user friendly, great reporting."

Capterra

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

"The whole experience has been really good."

Software Advice.

cezanne™

HR software for today's connected organisations

To find out how Cezanne HR's software can help you achieve your HR objectives, **book an online demo** today.

About Cezanne HR

Cezanne HR is leading the way in delivering smart, sophisticated Cloud HR software solutions to mid-sized businesses, both locally and globally, at a cost unthinkable just a few years ago. Cezanne HR's system is quick to deploy, easy to manage and packed full of features that save time and help everyone work together more productively and successfully.

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