

10 Steps to Successful Staffing and Recruitment Software Integration

Define Your Needs and Follow a Consistent Integration Process

This paper offers staffing and recruitment management a proven, well-researched 10-step process for the successful integration of staffing or recruitment software based on business goals.

Contents

5		Introduction
6		Does your business need integrations?
6		Prioritize Requirements
7		Understand the Integration Model
7		Take a Measured Approach
8		Test, Test and Test Again
9		Integrate, don't synchronize
9		Define Data Ownership
10		Gain Efficiency, not inefficiency
11		Make sure the software provider is in the game
11		Continually Develop

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In a fiercely competitive marketplace, technological innovation is a clear competitive differentiator. Used well, the right technology can make the difference between identifying a candidate quickly and missing the boat; it can help candidates reach out to recruitment companies at a time and in the way they prefer; and it can enable recruitment consultants to enhance the quality and timeliness of client interaction.



Staffing and recruitment software plays a crucial role in the continued success of agencies but there are also many opportunities to integrate third party applications with that recruitment software to smooth workflows, boost efficiency and transform performance.

From streamlining back office processes, such as payroll and invoicing, to exploring innovative front office applications, including links to social media, integration with the central recruitment software hub is compelling.

But there are a number of issues to consider to ensure success – from defining requirements to getting the right integration model. The following ten step approach for integrating third party applications to staffing and recruitment software should provide organizations with a clear understanding of how best to meet business objectives.

1. Why integrate and what integrations are required?

Many organizations approach a new recruitment software investment with a list of existing applications for integration which are unique to their business. But it is important to consider the depth of functionality available in the new solution – are all those applications still required? Are there in fact opportunities to rationalize the software portfolio and reduce costs?

To ensure the business only undertakes essential integrations, there are a number of questions to be considered:

- What are the business needs?
- Will this integration support business processes and reduce manual effort?
- Does the new recruitment software replace existing legacy functionality – such as Document Management?

2. Prioritize Requirements

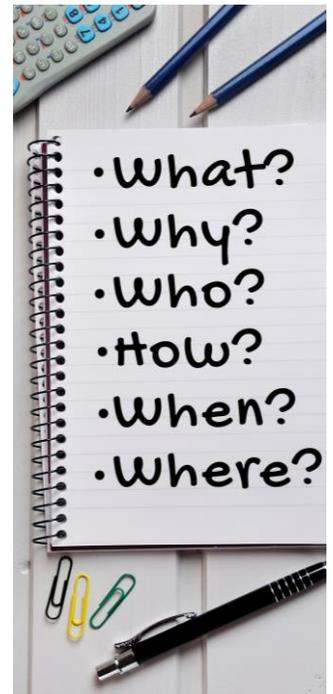
Separating front and back office integration requirements enables a business to quickly differentiate between the 'essential' and 'nice to have' integrations.

- Back Office applications such as Payroll, Accounting & HR are all likely to be essential integrations and must be achieved and tested before the new recruitment software goes live.
- Front Office, including search and business intelligence, may not be absolutely necessary and can be scheduled for a later date.

Front and back office integrations will not only have different levels of priority but different integration requirements, including security and data sensitivity.

Integration Tip

Work with the provider to understand the depth of functionality within the recruitment software and ensure all integrations meet business needs and improve staff efficiency.



Integration Tip

Organizations should not undertake all these integrations at once; identify those that are business critical and those on the wish list.

3. Understand the Integration Model

The timeline for the integration development will depend on the complexity involved.

- Does the vendor have off-the-shelf integrations built through direct collaboration with other software providers?
- Application Programming Interfaces (API) enable third party software providers to develop and offer off the shelf integrations – hugely increasing the breadth of software available to bolt on to the recruitment software and deliver additional business benefits.

Adapt has a number of standard integrations, including **Broadbean**, **cube19** and **Daxtra**.

4. Take a Measured Approach

One pitfall to avoid is requesting a lot of integrations and developing a hugely complex bespoke system upfront. Within a few months of using the system, users may find it over-complicated and the business may soon be requesting integrations are ‘unpicked’, which can be time-consuming and costly.

It is advisable to undertake these integrations one by one:

- Where possible, run one integration at a time for a few months.
- Discover what works well and where changes are required.
- Ensure the business is integrating the right systems and not ‘over-doing’ the levels of integration.

Of course, some integrations are interlinked – both payroll and invoicing must be integrated with the timesheet system before the system goes live if staff are to be paid correctly and invoices issued on time. These integrations will have to take place in parallel – but organizations need to be realistic about how much configuration work and testing is required.

Integration Tip

Understanding the integration models is key to creating a workable roadmap.



Integration Tip

Keep it simple and make sure the integrations are absolutely required.

5. Test, Test and Test Again

The testing process is critical and should encompass not only software testing but also process testing.

- Do processes function as they should, consistently?
- Are the processes for providing information to all outside agencies, including the government, working correctly?

For example, when payroll is integrated with the recruitment software, it is important to set aside ample time to test the payroll run.

- Run old and new systems in tandem.
- Do the payroll process in the old system and a subsection of that payroll run in the new system, checking timesheets and exports.
- Test and compare to make sure the taxes are the same in both systems.
- Ensure all processes are correct.



Integration Tip

Organizations need to be realistic about how long the configuration and testing will take.

6. Integrate, don't synchronize

Wherever possible, consider integrations, not synchronizations. There is a huge difference between the two approaches:

- Integration is two or more systems joined by exchanging data to the required degree.
- Synchronization is two or more systems updating exactly the same data.

Synchronization has a number of pitfalls:

- At some point, through perfectly normal maintenance for example, the systems get out of step.
- Allowing users to update information in both systems simultaneously may appear to be a good way of moving related data around systems automatically, but it is technically difficult and time consuming.

7. Define Data Ownership

It is essential that everyone knows which system owns the data – because users could find the process confusing if data can be updated anywhere.

- There are perceived efficiencies of 'any system update' model – someone in payroll, for example, wouldn't need to ask a recruiter to update a piece of information – but in reality no-one will be 100% sure what's happening, so there's a lot of double-checking.
- It's smarter to decide which system 'owns' which information. The 'owner' system then pushes any updates to the 'receiver' system, one-way, and everyone understands the process.



Integration Tip

Matching businesses needs to technical requirements is key to successful integration.

Integration Tip

Clarity is the key to minimizing confusion.

8. Gain efficiency, not inefficiency

The way in which integrations work with and enhance the recruitment process is key – and it is essential to ensure that integrations fit into the company’s business processes.

- It’s great to build an integration which allows recruiters to export payroll information to the payroll provider, for example, but if it doesn’t fit into the process in the right way, then it may not be used or may become extra work.
- Avoid a situation where integrations are less efficient than re-keying the information elsewhere.
- Users must not spend too much time sorting data. With a clear vision of requirements, the software provider will deliver an effective integration which saves time and increases hires.

Broadbean Integration

Take Broadbean as an example. It is simple to export a job to a job board as an advert on Broadbean but it is essential to consider the recruiting process when opting for a full integration. Broadbean will provide a long list of applicants – how should they be handled?

- Should they be reviewed in Broadbean and then ‘green flagged’ to shortlist against the job in the recruitment software?
- Should they be ‘amber flagged’ when they are not as suitable, but still create a record in the recruitment software?
- Or would it work better to long or short-list candidates against the role, and mark them as ‘via Broadbean’?

All are possible – it is about ensuring the integration model adopted matches a business’ specific processes.



Integration Tip

The most important factor is how business processes flow across the systems being integrated.



9. Make sure the software provider is in the game

This software deployment should support the business for many years to come. So while development and delivery may only take a few months, it is important to make sure the provider can support both its own software package and the integrations in the future.

For example:

- What is the provider's core business – is it all 'off the shelf' or does the company have skills in delivering bespoke systems?
- Does the vendor have the infrastructure and expertise to support the configuration required?
- Will the Service Level Agreement (SLA) cover both the recruitment software and the specific pieces of integration and configuration?

Companies with a strong track record in bespoke development will have the experience, skills and knowledge to avoid any pitfalls.

10. Continually Develop

While recruitment and staffing software is now the hub of the business and includes a raft of essential functionality, the speed with which new technology innovations are being introduced is exciting. Companies can now consider any number of new opportunities, including:

- Online timesheets
- Social media integrations
- Video interviews
- Big data analytics

From out of the box integrations to smart APIs, third party recruitment software integrations are becoming easier. Paying attention to the on-going developments of the recruitment software provider is the key to rapidly exploring new opportunities and technologies.

Integration Tip

Select a provider with a long history and a proven track record – an organization fully equipped to provide support on what are essential bespoke integrations.



Integration Tip

Continual innovation is at the heart of business differentiation.

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