



NUCLEUS
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SMB HCM Technology Value Matrix 2026

ANALYST

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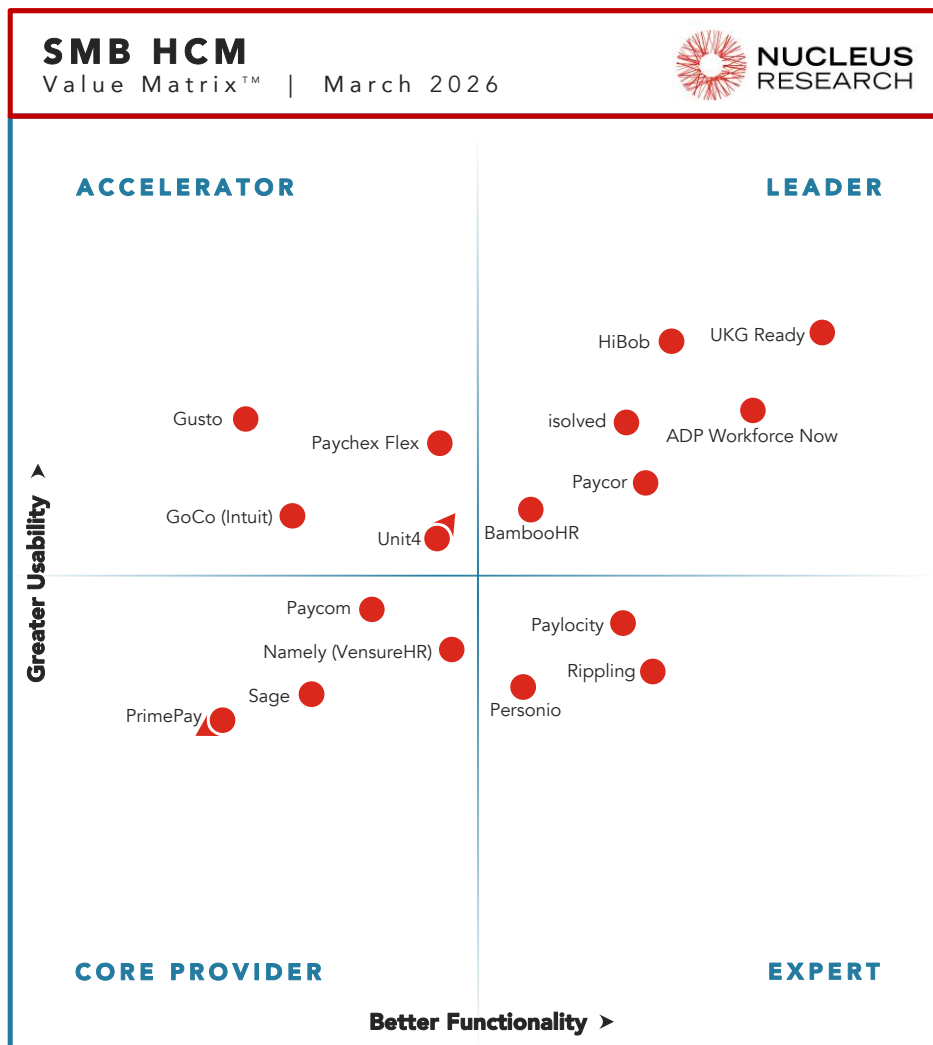
The Bottom Line

Innovation in the SMB HCM market is accelerating as vendors move beyond offering basic systems of record to increasingly sophisticated, unified platforms. Automation, embedded analytics, and AI-driven assistance are becoming more prevalent, enabling smaller HR teams to manage growing complexity without adding extraneous headcount. Generative AI features are quickly becoming expected, improving usability and employee self-service through digital assistants, while early agentic capabilities are introducing more proactive support across functions such as payroll and compliance. At the same time, vendors are investing in unified data architectures and pursuing mergers and acquisitions to expand functionality, strengthen AI capabilities, and address core and HCM-adjacent needs such as payroll, finance, and workforce management. Across the broader HCM technology market, differentiation is shifting toward usability, data quality, and the strength of the vendor-customer partnership. This is especially important for smaller organizations as they navigate an evolving landscape.

Market Overview

In the SMB HCM software market, the core mission of helping smaller teams manage growing operational complexity with more limited resources remains constant. What has evolved, however, is the rapid sophistication of the technology itself. Solutions that once functioned primarily as administrative systems of record are increasingly enhanced, with many offering enterprise-grade functionality, embedding automation, predictive insights, and AI-driven assistance directly within HR workflows.

SMB HCM technology is rapidly advancing beyond basic administration to deliver increasingly intelligent, automated workflows.



Generative AI remains a primary area of vendor investment, most commonly delivered through digital assistants that improve platform usability, answer employee questions, and ultimately reduce some of the administrative burden on HR teams. Some vendors are beginning to introduce Agentic AI features that go beyond question-and-answer

interactions, proactively identifying anomalies in areas such as payroll or compliance and recommending potential resolutions. As AI capabilities mature, vendors are also placing greater emphasis on unified, single-database architectures to mitigate issues caused by fragmented data and enable more reliable insights.

As competition increases, mergers and acquisitions have risen as vendors expand both core and adjacent capabilities, particularly in areas such as payroll, workforce management, finance, and AI. This has also helped to round out functionality for specific verticals or to support expanded global reach. At the same time, usability continues to be a key consideration for small and mid-sized organizations. Proactive vendor partnership and support have become equally important as organizations seek to maximize their return on investment while navigating complexity. Dedicated resources, such as client success partners, HR business partners, and managed services, enable these organizations to fill any gaps in internal expertise.

In this year's Value Matrix, Nucleus assessed select HCM vendors with offerings built to support small and mid-sized organizations of up to 2,500 employees. Positioning is based on the relative product functionality and usability of each vendor, conveying the value customers drive from use of the solution's capabilities (Nucleus Research X222 – Understanding the Value Matrix, December 2023.) The report is intended to serve as a snapshot of the SMB-centric HCM technology market, informing customers about the specific ways vendors are delivering value and taking stock of what can be expected in the future based on current investments.

As AI capabilities mature, vendors are placing a greater emphasis on unified, single-database architectures.

This year's Value Matrix assessed select HCM vendors with solutions built to support the needs of small and mid-sized organizations with up to 2,500 employees.

Leaders

Leaders in the Value Matrix include ADP Workforce Now, BambooHR, HiBob, isolved, Paycor, and UKG Ready.

ADP Workforce Now

ADP Workforce Now is an AI-powered HCM solution specifically designed for North American organizations with 50 to 1,000 employees. The platform includes functionality for payroll, HR, time and attendance, benefits, performance, recruiting, and compensation management, all built on a single database. ADP Workforce Now is built for quick time-to-value, with a design that emphasizes ease of configuration and usability. The system also provides analytics and benchmarking capabilities powered by ADP DataCloud, which enables clients to compare their people data against a dataset representing 1 million U.S.-

based employers and 39 million employees. Compliance is another point of strength for the vendor, which maintains payroll tax updates for all 50 U.S. states and Canadian provinces.

ADP Workforce Now also includes ADP Assist, a cross-platform generative AI-powered tool that enables HR teams, managers and employees to complete tasks and surface insights through natural language conversations. For organizations looking to further tailor the platform to specific requirements, the vendor offers more than 400 integrations through its ADP Marketplace and ADP API Central for custom data connections.

Recent updates and announcements include:

► **WorkForce Software Acquisition**

In November 2026, ADP announced a unified global Workforce Management Suite following its acquisition of WorkForce Software. The new suite is now integrated directly into ADP Workforce Now, ADP Lyric HCM, and ADP Global Payroll.

► **ADP Assist Enhancements**

Enhancements to ADP Assist include automated payroll oversight and smart reporting and analytics. Automated payroll oversight identifies and helps resolve payroll variances, catch missing tax registrations, and check for anomalies. Smart reporting and analytics enable users to ask natural-language questions and generate charts, summaries, and custom dashboards.

BambooHR

BambooHR provides an HCM platform designed for small and lower mid-market organizations, with functionality spanning core HR, onboarding, applicant tracking, time tracking, payroll, benefits administration, performance management, and people analytics. The vendor emphasizes usability and time-to-value, supporting employers who require centralized employee data and standardized HR workflows without the implementation complexity associated with enterprise suites. BambooHR has expanded its embedded AI through the Ask BambooHR feature, designed to reduce administrative workload and surface workforce insights to improve decision-making. Embedded AI throughout the platform can provide answers to employee questions about company policies and benefits, generate performance feedback summaries, and filter reports. The vendor has also broadened its platform through ecosystem partnerships and module enhancements

ADP Workforce Now includes ADP Assist, a cross-platform generative AI-powered tool that enables HR teams, managers, and employees to complete tasks and surface insights.

The BambooHR platform is designed for the needs of small and lower mid-market organizations, emphasizing usability and time-to-value.

that support compliance, compensation management, and global hiring through BambooHR Employer of Record.

Recent updates and announcements include:

▶ **AI Expansion**

In May 2025, BambooHR announced additional AI-enabled capabilities across its platform, including compensation benchmarking and enhanced analytics tools.

▶ **Global Employment**

In addition to its Employer of Record services, delivered through its partnership with Remote, BambooHR has introduced Local Payroll bridges to connect HRIS data directly with regional payroll providers.

▶ **New Elite Plan**

BambooHR introduced a new Elite Plan, which includes Compensation Management, Custom Dashboards and Analytics, HR Benchmarks, and Premium Services.

▶ **Compliance Suite**

The vendor announced Compliance Intelligence (powered by VirgilHR), Compliance Training (powered by EasyLlama), and 1-9 and E-Verify Automation (Powered by Mitratach).

▶ **ATS Enhancements**

Recent feature additions to BambooHR's ATS include Candidate Self-Scheduling, support for LinkedIn Paid Job Ads and SEEK Job Ads, and ATS Custom Reporting.

▶ **Payroll Enhancements**

The vendor has launched several enhancements to its payroll functionality, including accounting integrations with QuickBooks Online and Xero, Job Costing, Payroll Custom Reporting, and Time Clocks.

BambooHR recently announced additional AI-enabled capabilities across its platform, including compensation benchmarking and enhanced analytics tools.

HiBob

HiBob's cloud-native HCM platform, Bob, includes modules for core HR, talent, hiring (ATS), onboarding, time and attendance, finance, native US payroll and benefits, UK payroll, payroll hub, performance, learning, workforce planning, and people analytics. Bob's unified architecture ensures that all HR, talent, and payroll processes operate within a single data model and user experience. The user experience is intuitive, with a social media-like interface and people-centric design

that includes social, performance, and recognition tools to drive adoption, improve engagement, and reinforce company culture. Bob also delivers a consistent experience across the workforce. For example, configurable employee profiles serve as a single source of record across the entire system.

The platform's org chart enables users to visualize and understand the relationships between different employees, teams, and departments. Bob automates workflows across areas such as workforce planning and hiring, onboarding and offboarding, reporting, and compensation management, enabling HR teams to increase productivity and rededicate time previously spent on manual tasks to higher-value, strategic initiatives. Positioned as an agile alternative to traditional enterprise suites, HiBob emphasizes quick time-to-value while providing the scale and governance required for efficient growth.

Recent updates and announcements include:

▶ **Native Payroll and Benefits Administration for US Customers**

HiBob launched a native payroll and benefits administration solution in the United States that is fully integrated with Core HR to eliminate middleware, reduce reconciliation work, and support automated calculations, compliance updates, and real-time insights.

▶ **Expanded AI Capabilities**

The vendor has expanded its AI capabilities with the beta release of the Bob Companion conversational HR copilot (GA April 2026), which offers automated people analytics and contextual insights across talent management and service delivery via web, mobile, and collaboration tools such as Slack.

▶ **Bob Skills**

HiBob introduced a unified skills framework (Bob Skills) that is embedded directly in Core HR, making skill and capability data foundational to the platform's infrastructure, rather than siloed.

▶ **Bob Finance**

The vendor launched Bob Finance, a fully-integrated Financial Planning & Analysis (FP&A) solution that brings financial planning, forecasting, budgeting, and real-time financial and people analytics into a standard data model to improve cross-departmental planning.

Bob, HiBob's HCM platform, automates workflows across areas such as workforce planning and hiring, onboarding and offboarding, and reporting.

HiBob is expanding its AI capabilities with Bob Companion, a conversational HR copilot that offers automated people analytics and contextual insights.

► Integration Enhancements

HiBob released advanced workforce planning APIs and webhook support to enable tighter integration with third-party business systems.

isolved

The isolved People Cloud platform offers a unified HCM experience with a modular approach. This design provides organizations with a single connected experience across the employee lifecycle, encompassing HR, payroll, benefits, talent, workforce management, compensation management, leave management, and analytics. People Cloud can be accessed through a web-based interface, and the vendor offers a dedicated mobile app. isolved also offers several resources, including implementation support and services for HR, benefits, talent acquisition (including RPO), and alumni.

Automation and self-service are core focuses for isolved, and the People Cloud offers flexible workflows and mobile-ready tools to streamline tedious administrative tasks. isolved Always-On HR is the vendor's intelligent virtual assistant, which can provide employees with instant answers to questions such as how to find pay stubs, or what their PTO balance is, reducing the burden on HR. Security and compliance are also emphasized within People Cloud, with built-in features for secure identity management and reporting.

isolved has continuously incorporated AI across People Cloud modules. For example, the Attract & Hire module includes job advertisement generation and candidate matching capabilities; Learn & Grow can deliver personalized learning recommendations and insights; and Predictive People Analytics enables teams to gain visibility into critical workforce metrics through forecasting and actionable guidance.

Recent updates and announcements include:

► New Payroll Features

isolved launched several Payroll-centric features, including Payroll Lock, Payroll Fraud Detection, Perfect Payroll, and Payroll Anywhere. Payroll Lock enables administrators to process payroll using the previous results instead of a real-time calculation. Payroll Fraud Detection expands monitoring across account changes, payroll processing, and reporting, and includes a suspicious activity dashboard to reduce fraud risk. Perfect Payroll provides administrators with crucial payroll insights to prevent errors, and

isolved People Cloud is designed to provide organizations with a single connected experience across the employee lifecycle.

Payroll Anywhere enables them to process or submit payroll directly from the People Cloud mobile app.

▶ **Benefits Guidance**

Benefits Guidance was introduced to help employees compare plan costs and receive personalized recommendations during open enrollment to support more informed decisions.

▶ **Talent Acquisition Enhancements**

isolved released Advanced Hiring Workflow Automation, which adds configurable soft stops for background checks, drug screens, and interview scheduling. Additionally, the vendor now offers Candidate Chat to Apply, which enables candidates to apply for roles and book interviews at the time of application through a conversational interface. The AI Recruiter Agent, another new addition, uses Agentic AI with vector search and natural-language job matching to surface more relevant candidates and speed up sourcing.

▶ **AI-powered Support**

The vendor launched Sam, an AI-powered support assistant built right into People Cloud. Sam is available 24/7 to give customers quick and accurate answers to their questions. Trained in the nuances of HR, payroll, and benefits, Sam understands their challenges and provides the right guidance. When a question requires deeper support, Sam connects them directly with isolved's support team.

isolved has released new payroll-centric features, including Payroll Lock, Payroll Fraud Detection, Perfect Payroll, and Payroll Anywhere.

Paycor

Paycor, a Paychex company, is a provider of HCM solutions built for midsized, growing businesses with enterprise needs. The vendor's unified, all-in-one platform strategy integrates HR, payroll, talent, and workforce management into a single database. Specific modules include HCM Cor (including payroll and core HR), Workforce Management, Talent Acquisition, Talent Management, and Benefits Administration. In addition to its technology offerings, Paycor also provides advisory services led by HR experts, offering strategic guidance to customers. The vendor's expertise in serving organizations in frontline-heavy industries such as healthcare and manufacturing has also led to the introduction of vertical-specific product configuration and integrations.

Paycor integrates HR, payroll, talent, and workforce management into a single database.

Paycor's primary focus is connecting leaders with the data, insights, and efficiency required to make well-informed decisions. In this, the

vendor's dataset delivers valuable insights to organizations through advanced analytics and benchmarking tools, enabling leaders to gain greater visibility into labor trends, compensation strategies, and employee engagement metrics. Paycor Assistant, the vendor's intelligent AI companion, provides users with access to frequently asked questions, guides user interactions with the platform, and can be used with the Paycor mobile app. Additional AI capabilities include job description authoring and Smart Sourcing for talent acquisition.

Paycor updated its Compensation Management functionality, which now includes multi-cycle support and improved cycle management.

Recent updates and announcements include:

► **Enhanced Sign-in Experience**

In April 2025, Paycor introduced an enhanced sign-in experience that increases security.

► **New Templates in Report Builder**

In August 2025, Paycor announced the availability of payroll and HR templates in Report Builder. Additionally, the vendor's Benefits Portal was redesigned to provide a more modern, personalized, and engaging employee experience.

► **Paycor Pulse Updates**

In October 2025, the vendor announced that its Paycor Pulse tool now supports multiple simultaneous event-based surveys, including 30-, 60-, and 90-day check-ins.

► **Compensation Management Updates**

In December 2025, Paycor made updates to its Compensation Management functionality to provide seamless payroll integration, multi-cycle support, and improved cycle management.

UKG Ready

The UKG Ready suite includes end-to-end HCM capabilities that are tailored to the needs of small and mid-sized organizations with complex, enterprise-level needs, especially for managing frontline workforces. UKG Ready sits on the UKG Workforce Operating Platform, which provides a single source of record. The suite can handle complex pay rules, multi-entity structures, and layered compliance structures. It also has an open ecosystem that enables organizations to configure the solution to specific needs with third-party integrations.

Through UKG's longstanding expertise in the HCM market and specialization in the frontline workforce, the vendor offers a unique set of proprietary data that provides organizations with insights into

people, culture, and business, helping to improve strategic decision-making and strengthen workplace culture. For example, Ready includes Retention Predictors that help to identify flight risk based on specific factors, and the UKG Great Place to Work Hub provides benchmark comparisons and real-time recommendations based on more than 100 million global employee survey responses. In addition, Ready includes general HR practice guidance that provides leaders with the steps needed to proactively mitigate challenges, such as attrition.

UKG Bryte AI in Ready delivers personalized insights and proactive recommendations across areas including staffing, scheduling, and HR operations. These tools are designed to highlight what matters most to each team member, helping leaders and managers act with precision and confidence without replacing human judgment.

Recent updates and announcements include:

▶ **UKG Beacon**

UKG Beacon was introduced as a native employee recognition and engagement/collaboration solution within UKG Ready. Designed for SMB and mid-market organizations, the solution enables employees and managers to recognize wins and milestones via a social recognition feed. AI-driven prompts encourage timely and consistent engagement across teams, and configurable rewards, budgets, and automated celebrations support recognition programs at scale.

▶ **Inova Payroll Acquisition**

UKG announced its acquisition of Inova Payroll, a well-established UKG Ready reseller. The move will deliver a more consistent payroll experience for small businesses of one to 75 employees.

▶ **UKG Managed Services**

UKG Managed Services was launched to provide customers with access to experienced specialists who can handle the execution of operations while maintaining full visibility and control of their UKG Ready instance. Offerings within UKG Managed Services include UKG Ready Managed Payroll Services, UKG Ready Managed Garnishments, UKG Ready Managed Benefits, and UKG Ready Premium Benefits.

▶ **UKG Document Manager**

UKG released UKG Document Manager, a centralized, secure solution for managing employee documents within the UKG Ready platform.

UKG offers a unique set of proprietary data that provides organizations with insights into people, culture, and business to improve strategic decision-making and workplace culture.

► **UKG Ready Recruiting Updates**

UKG Ready Recruiting now includes UKG Ready Interview Scheduling, which integrates with Microsoft Outlook calendars and uses conversational AI to guide candidates through self-scheduling. The feature automates availability matching, scheduling confirmations, and reminders in a central location.

► **UKG Ready Payroll for UK**

UKG launched UKG Ready Payroll for the UK, delivering payroll capabilities built to meet UK statutory and operational requirements while remaining fully integrated with HR, time, and workforce data.

UKG announced its acquisition of Inova Payroll, which is expected to deliver a more consistent payroll experience for small businesses of one to 75 employees.

Experts

Experts in the Value Matrix include Paylocity, Personio, and Rippling.

Paylocity

The Paylocity HCM platform includes modules for core HR, payroll, benefits administration, learning, time and attendance, talent acquisition and management, compensation, spend management, and employee experience. Focusing on flexibility, the solution can be configured to meet the needs of organizations of all sizes. Workflow automation enables HR practitioners to reallocate time to higher-value work, while AI-powered insights and recommendations enable users to improve productivity. The vendor has also invested in AI, with features across scheduling, employee development, career pathing, and employee engagement recommendations. The Paylocity AI Assistant offers users a chat interface to answer questions and streamline workflows for HR, finance, and IT tasks. In addition to its technology offerings, Paylocity provides implementation resources and a knowledge base with adoption kits and on-demand learning to support customer success.

The Paylocity AI Assistant provides a chat interface for providing answers to questions and streamlining HR, finance, and IT workflows.

Recent updates and announcements include:

► **Peer-to-Peer Rewards**

In June 2025, Paylocity added Peer-to-Peer rewards capabilities within its Recognition & Rewards solution, enabling employees to provide direct recognition and reward to their peers.

► **Paylocity for Finance**

In July 2025, the vendor announced the launch of Paylocity for Finance following its acquisition of Airbase, a provider of spend management software.

Personio

Personio is an intelligent HR platform that connects Core HR, talent management, and payroll into one system. Data is interconnected across the platform which allows for smoother workflows, reduced manual work, and reduction in errors across the employee lifecycle. The vendor offers pre-built templates, an intuitive workflow builder, and integrated AI-driven tools, making the solution easy to tailor to support exact workflows and unique organizational structures. This is underpinned by deep expertise in serving European businesses, ensuring support of legal entities and meeting regional compliance with regulations such as EU pay transparency and local statutory requirements.

Personio offers pre-built templates, a workflow builder, and integrated AI-driven tools to simplify workflow configuration.

In 2025, Personio launched a new product experience that emphasizes automating everyday tasks, supporting organizational change, and providing AI-powered insights for faster decision-making. With this in mind, the vendor has released Personio Assistant, a feature that provides employees with instant answers to work-related questions. Additional AI investment includes embedded AI features that deliver insights across the Personio platform, as well as AI that can extract payroll data directly from payslips and documents to reduce manual errors.

Other recent updates and announcements include:

► Competency Frameworks

Personio introduced competency frameworks, which can use existing job architecture structures or set up individual job-specific competencies with proficiency levels, and a gender pay gap reporting functionality in analytics

Rippling

Rippling provides a unified HR, IT, and Finance platform built on its proprietary Employee Graph data model, which connects people, systems, and financial workflows into a single system of record. Initially designed for small and mid-sized organizations, over time, Rippling has evolved to also effectively meet the needs of larger enterprises. The vendor's HCM solution includes functionality for payroll, time and attendance, talent management, benefits administration, and optional PEO services. Payroll capabilities support automated tax filing and compliance for W-2 employees and 1099 contractors, as well as global payroll and Employer of Record (EOR) services.

Organizations can build and deploy custom workflows using data from the system or from connected third-party apps. Additionally, with Rippling's App Studio, tools can be built internally without coding. For customers looking to extend their deployment with third-party tools, the Rippling App Shop offers access to more than 650 integrations across accounting, CRM, IT, and communication solutions.

The Rippling App Studio enables tools to be built internally without the need for coding expertise.

Recent updates and announcements include:

► **Rippling Recruiting Enhancements**

Rippling has made several enhancements to its Rippling Recruiting solution, including AI-powered features like Application Review and Interview Assistant to help organizations quickly identify and hire top talent.

► **Rippling 1:1s**

The vendor launched Rippling 1:1s, an integrated tool that brings performance context directly into check-ins and provides a real-time dashboard of 1:1 activity across an organization.

Accelerators

Accelerators in the Value Matrix include GoCo (Intuit), Gusto, Paychex Flex, and Unit4.

GoCo (Intuit)

GoCo delivers an HR and benefits platform for small and lower mid-market businesses, spanning hiring and onboarding, HR administration, benefits management, and workflow-driven processes designed to reduce manual HR effort. GoCo's platform focus has historically aligned with SMB organizations seeking structured HR operations across the employee lifecycle. Intuit recently acquired GoCo to expand its ability to address broader HCM needs for growing SMB customers within its payroll and financial management ecosystem. The organization plans to integrate GoCo functionality into QuickBooks Payroll and the Intuit Enterprise Suite to support HR workflows alongside financial operations.

In May 2025, Intuit completed its acquisition of GoCo, which will integrate the platform's capabilities with the Intuit Enterprise Suite and QuickBooks Payroll.

Recent updates and announcements include:

► **Acquisition by Intuit**

In April 2025, Intuit announced it had signed an agreement to acquire GoCo, stating that GoCo's HR and benefits capabilities would be integrated into the Intuit Enterprise Suite and QuickBooks Payroll. The acquisition closed in May 2025.

Gusto

Gusto is a provider of payroll, HR, and benefits administration capabilities for small businesses. The platform supports full-service payroll and tax filing across all US states, contractor payments, time tracking, and benefits administration. Gusto remains positioned as a payroll-first solution designed to reduce administrative burden for organizations without dedicated HR or finance teams. In recent years, Gusto has expanded its platform with additional financial functionality, including bill pay and payroll-related cash flow tools. The vendor continues to invest in AI-supported experiences to simplify payroll execution and reduce the number of manual steps required to complete recurring administrative tasks.

As a payroll-first solution, Gusto supports full-service payroll and tax filing across all U.S. states. The vendor also has functionality for time tracking and benefits administration.

Recent updates and announcements include:

► Partnership with Melio

In May 2025, Gusto partnered with Melio to launch bill pay and invoicing capabilities within the Gusto platform, enabling customers to manage vendor payments alongside payroll workflows.

► Payroll Bridge

In September 2025, Gusto and Parafin introduced Payroll Bridge, a line-of-credit offering designed to help small businesses cover short-term payroll cash flow gaps.

► ChatGPT Integration

In January 2026, Gusto announced the availability of the Gusto app within ChatGPT, enabling select customers to run payroll and analyze payroll data in a conversational interface.

Paychex Flex

Paychex is an HCM software provider that delivers a suite of technology and advisory services across human resources, payroll, benefits, and insurance. The vendor's Paychex Flex solution is cloud-based and built for the needs of owner operators and organizations investing in HR. The platform's functionality covers core HR, payroll, talent acquisition and management, benefits administration, time and attendance, and compliance management. The vendor also complements its technology offerings with a team of expert HR professionals who provide customers with personalized support and guidance across areas such as compliance.

Intelligence is another primary aspect of the Paychex Flex platform, and the vendor is integrating AI throughout the platform to streamline

repetitive tasks and provide insights that can proactively address workforce challenges. For example, Paychex offers an analytics suite that delivers AI-driven predictive insights within a conversational interface. The vendor also offers tools such as Paychex Pre-Check, which enables employees to review their paychecks for accuracy before payroll is run. For practitioners, the vendor's unified mobile application enables remote payroll processing and reporting.

Paychex announced a partnership with SoFi, providing financial well-being resources and solutions to Paychex Flex Perks users.

Organizations that wish to augment their Paychex Flex deployment with third-party tools can take advantage of curated, pre-built integrations in the Paychex Marketplace. Meanwhile, the Paychex Flex Perks marketplace can be offered to employees at no additional cost to the employer, providing them with access to a variety of lifestyle benefits, financial wellness tools, and discounts.

Recent updates and announcements include:

▶ **Paychex Partner Pro**

In June 2025, Paychex launched Paychex Partner Pro, a portal designed to provide accountants with quick access to critical client data, reporting, and insights for business clients that use the Paychex Flex platform.

▶ **Partnership with SoFi**

In July 2025, Paychex announced its partnership with SoFi, bringing its financial well-being resources and solutions to Paychex Flex Perks users.

▶ **Bill Pay**

In September 2025, the vendor announced a new financial management solution for accounts payable, powered by SMB finance technology provider, BILL. The solution, called Bill Pay, integrates payroll, HR, and accounts payable to provide a more consistent experience.

▶ **Participant Event Notifications**

In November 2025, Paychex launched Participant Event Notifications, an AI-powered wealth management solution for financial advisors. The tool uses payroll and plan level data to alert advisors of retirement plan participant milestones, such as work or life events, through notifications within the Paychex Flex Advisor Console.

► **AI-driven Solutions**

In December 2025, Paychex announced a suite of AI-driven solutions, including Agentic AI Service Capabilities and a GenAI Employment Law Platform that enables Paychex HR experts and clients to navigate complex employment laws, create compliant documents, and stay up-to-date on regulatory changes.

Paychex is integrating AI throughout the Paychex Flex platform to streamline repetitive tasks and deliver insights needed to proactively address workforce challenges.

Unit4

Unit4 delivers a cloud-native HCM solution designed for organizations in industries such as the public sector, non-profit, higher education, and professional services. The solution's functionality spans core HR, payroll, talent management, learning, compensation planning, and succession planning. Unit4 HCM's primary differentiator is its native interoperability with Unit4 ERP, creating a single source of record by unifying workforce and financial data for improved insights. The platform also offers flexible approaches, allowing organizations to adopt modules at their own pace and leverage pre-configured Industry Models to achieve quicker, more cost-effective deployments. App Studio, Unit4's low-code platform, enables organizations to customize screens, workflows, and applications without requiring extensive IT involvement, thereby enhancing configurability. AVA is Unit4's unified AI agent that acts as a central "work orchestrator" across finance-, project-, and HR-related workflows. This approach provides a single conversational interface that understands context across the entire Unit4 ecosystem and can automate multi-step tasks and proactively identify issues.

Recent updates and announcements include:

► **Payroll Navigator**

Unit4 launched Payroll Navigator, the vendor's next-generation payroll workspace that unifies the entire payroll cycle into a single, guided experience with configurable templates and built-in audit history.

Unit4 launched Payroll Navigator, a payroll workspace that unifies the entire cycle into a single, guided experience.

► **AVA Enhancements**

Recent updates to AVA include AVA Performance Insights and AVA Tasks. AVA Tasks integrates ERP workflow approvals into Microsoft Teams, enabling users to quickly act on tasks such as absences, timesheets, and travel requests without logging into the ERP system. AVA Performance Insights is a feature that automatically compiles performance discussion data into clear, structured insights that cover achievements, challenges, and growth opportunities.

▶ **Engagement Reports**

Unit4 introduced a comprehensive set of new reports designed to enhance the measurement and interpretation of engagement metrics.

▶ **Attachment of Earnings**

The Attachment of Earnings capability was launched to ensure the accurate processing of employee deduction orders mandated by courts or government authorities, and automates the import of court orders in countries where integrated services are available.

▶ **Docebo Learning Management Integration**

Unit4 announced that the Docebo learning management solution will soon be an integrated part of Unit4 HCM. The move will connect workforce data with learning opportunities, enabling organizations to deliver personalized development paths that align with business goals.

The Attachment of Earnings capability was launched in Unit4 HCM to ensure accuracy in processing employee deduction orders.

Core Providers

Core Providers in the Value Matrix include Namely (VensureHR), Paycom, PrimePay, and Sage.

Namely (VensureHR)

Namely, a Vensure Employer Solutions company, delivers an HCM platform designed for organizations with 35 to 2,000+ employees. The solution includes core HR, payroll, onboarding, benefits administration, HR analytics, and workforce management functionality, including time tracking and scheduling capabilities, with a strong emphasis on compliance support. The platform is accessible via desktop, web, and mobile applications and includes modules for performance management, HR compliance, and applicant tracking. Namely also offers managed HR, payroll, and benefits services, supporting organizations with complex payroll structures or compliance-sensitive operations.

In addition to its technology offerings, Namely offers managed HR, payroll, and benefits services for customers.

Namely supports organizations across verticals, including healthcare, hospitality, manufacturing, finance, professional services, and nonprofit. Through its partner ecosystem, customers can integrate with global payroll providers, retirement plan vendors, financial wellness solutions, and employee engagement tools to extend platform capabilities.

Recent updates and announcements include:

► **Distro Acquisition**

In January 2026, Vensure acquired AI-powered recruiting platform Distro, expanding talent acquisition automation capabilities across its portfolio.

► **CreAI Acquisition**

In November 2025, Vensure announced the acquisition of CreAI as part of its broader expansion of AI-driven HR technology capabilities.

Vensure acquired AI-powered recruiting provider, Distro, to expand its talent acquisition capabilities.

Paycom

Paycom is a comprehensive HCM solution that includes functionality for HR, payroll, time and attendance, talent acquisition, talent management, benefits administration, reporting, and compliance delivered through a single database with real-time data processing to ensure insights are accurate and up to date. Through its single-database approach, Paycom has introduced several automations across the platform. For example, Beti is the vendor's employee-first automated payroll experience, which enables employees to approve their payroll before it is processed. Beti works with Everyday, a flexible pay solution that enables employees to access earned wages daily without incurring fees. GONE, a feature of the vendor's Time Off Requests tool, automates PTO approval decisions based on an organization's time-off policies, including staffing needs, employee seniority, and more. The vendor also offers IWant, an AI engine that provides quick answers to employee and manager questions through a conversational interface.

Paycom's functionality is delivered through a single database with real-time data processing to ensure the accuracy of insights.

Paycom's advanced analytics and compliance management tools give leaders the insight needed to mitigate risk and enhance workforce strategies. Additionally, the vendor's Client Action Center tool provides payroll, tax, and banking administrators with real-time insights into wire transfers and tax accounts.

PrimePay

PrimePay, formerly SyncHR, is a cloud-based human capital management platform designed to streamline HR and payroll operations for small and mid-sized organizations. The suite includes core HR, payroll, time and attendance, talent acquisition, performance management, learning management, and analytics. The platform operates on a single data model, enabling consistent reporting across HR and payroll workflows while supporting integration with third-party applications through APIs. PrimePay differentiates through role-based HR workflows that assign tasks to defined company roles rather than

specific individuals, helping ensure continuity in HR processes regardless of personnel changes or workload distribution.

In September 2024, PrimePay introduced expanded analytics capabilities providing visibility into workforce productivity, manager effectiveness, and labor-related trends to support more data-driven workforce decisions. Since integrating SyncHR capabilities into its broader platform, PrimePay has also strengthened support for more complex payroll configurations, including multi-entity environments and configurable earning and deduction structures. The vendor continues to emphasize service-backed payroll delivery and compliance reliability, particularly for multi-location and compliance-heavy industries.

Recent updates and announcements include:

► **Merger with CoAdvantage**

In June 2025, PrimePay completed its merger with CoAdvantage, expanding its combined payroll and HR service capabilities.

Sage

Sage, a provider of solutions for finance, HR, and payroll, offers Sage People and Sage HR for Human Capital Management needs across small and mid-sized organizations.

Sage HR is an all-in-one HR platform that offers modular flexibility while maintaining a unified approach. For instance, customers can start with Core HR and Leave Management modules, with the ability to add extra modules for areas like performance management, shift scheduling, and recruiting as requirements change. The solution also enables automation of administrative tasks across areas like new hire onboarding.

Sage People is a cloud-based HR solution that is designed for the needs of global organizations, with functionality that spans core HR, UK payroll, time and attendance, leave management, talent acquisition, talent management, and people analytics.

Recent updates and announcements include:

► **Criterion Acquisition**

In October 2025, Sage announced its acquisition of Criterion, a unified HCM platform that will expand the vendor's AI-powered product ecosystem.

PrimePay has introduced expanded analytics capabilities to extend visibility into workforce productivity, manager effectiveness, and labor-related trends.

Sage HR offers modular flexibility while maintaining a unified approach, enabling customers to easily scale their deployment.