

A woman with dark hair and glasses is looking at a laptop screen. The image is overlaid with various futuristic digital elements, including glowing blue lines, data points, and semi-transparent screens displaying charts and graphs. The overall color scheme is dark blue and teal.

IRIS

Top 5 Considerations When Selecting a Payroll Technology Solution

IRIS. Look forward

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Payroll is a highly competitive market, and in the past, many firms have avoided entering it because it wasn't worth the investment. However, the market is changing, and CPA firms are expanding their service offerings. Rather than shunning payroll, firms see payroll as an additional service they can offer their clients to help improve customer retention while seriously enhancing their bottom line.

With more firms in the market for payroll software platforms, it's essential to know what to consider when looking at the

various options. Here are five aspects you should consider when selecting your firm's next payroll technology solution.



1. Software Architecture

For many firms, payroll can become one of their most profitable services. To reach that level of success, it's important to look at the software to ensure that it is a good fit for the size of your firm and your clients.

Here are three key aspects that you should look for to make sure your new payroll solution is perfect for your firm.

Reliability

When it comes to payroll, you can't afford to make mistakes. It's expected that payroll is completed on time and with no errors every time. The slightest errors or delays can lead to lasting issues with your clients. You need a payroll solution that reliably provides quality results every time.

Scalability

Payroll software can catalyze growth within your firm, and it should grow with you. A rigid, inflexible solution that only supports a small number of clients will limit your firm's growth and cause you to come back to the market looking for a new solution in only a few years. The right payroll solution should be able to grow with your firm, always providing you with the support you need to take your next step toward success.

Configurability

The right solution should be flexible enough to work alongside your existing processes, rather than steamrolling your firm and dictating how work must be accomplished.

Not only should the payroll software be configurable to fit the specific workflow and needs of your firm, but it should meet the individual needs of each of your clients. Some clients will want detailed reports and take a hands-on approach to payroll, while others will be more passive. Your software platform must be flexible enough to meet each client's needs without impacting the solution's performance.

2. Customer Experience

Of course, your new payroll solution should provide you with the support and tools your firm needs, but it should also be approachable and easy for your clients. Payroll software that is difficult for clients to interact with will only create additional problems for your team to solve.

Your payroll software solution should include some form of a client portal. A client portal gives access to payroll information to your clients on their terms, allowing them to view, access, and modify payroll information whenever they want. By empowering your clients with a client portal, they become responsible for modifying and editing information to ensure that all data points have been inputted correctly. In case of any errors, the clients are responsible for updating the information rather than requiring you or your team to do the manual data entry for every client.

A client portal also standardizes how clients interact with your firm. It creates a single process for all clients to communicate with your firm, eliminating the need to manage multiple channels simultaneously.

Lastly, you can't ignore the importance of dependable customer support because let's face it... processing payroll can be stressful; involving financial data and compliance with various legal and tax requirements can make even the most routine processes be nerve-wracking. Having a reliable customer support team helps address concerns, resolve issues, and clarify doubts promptly, ensuring smooth operations and accurate payroll processing. Whether it's troubleshooting technical glitches, understanding complex features, or navigating regulatory complexities, having a responsive and knowledgeable support team instills confidence in your payroll software and its capabilities.

"With our prior provider, we would make a phone call and be put on hold for numerous hours, just to get connected with someone who read a script that often times was incorrect, didn't match what was in their own help files or just didn't apply to our issues. With IRIS, we're typically able to get a hold of somebody immediately and if the first person we reach doesn't know the answer to our question, they're able to put us in contact with someone who does."

Brittney Bennett, Applied Payroll Solutions' COO

3. Product Integrations

If your software isn't integrated, such as a timekeeping application integration, it creates more work for your firm to complete even simple tasks.

If programs are not integrated, they cannot share information between them. This leads your team to copy, paste, and manually input data from one system into another. It doesn't matter how great the payroll software is; if it doesn't easily integrate and partner with your existing solutions, it will only become more of a burden than it's worth.

Integrations allow your payroll software to easily communicate and collaborate with your existing suite of software solutions, streamlining your workflow and improving your bottom line.



4. Ease of Use

It doesn't matter how efficient your payroll software is if your staff doesn't know how to use it. A payroll solution should be both easy to use and easy to learn.

When you first introduce your new payroll solution to your firm, there will be a period of time when everyone is learning how to best work with the new software, and productivity will go down. The more complex and challenging the product is, the longer this introductory period will take. In the worst-case scenario, if the product is so difficult to learn, you risk employees giving up and returning to outdated practices. The easier a payroll solution is to learn, the faster you can introduce and adapt it to help your firm start working more efficiently and doing more with your time and money.

The day-to-day use also matters when determining which software is the best for your firm. Not only should your payroll software be easy to learn, but it should also be easy to use daily. Look for straightforward, simple, and streamlined user interface options that make completing tasks easier, rather than getting bogged down in clicking through multiple windows and pop-ups.



5. Automation

Your new payroll software should reduce your workload, and one of the key ways it can do that is with automation. Automation performs repetitive tasks through programs in the software, reducing the need for human intervention.

Payroll automation removes more than just menial tasks; it also significantly impacts your error rate. Automated processes take all of their information from existing data points, and there is no human interaction

that can possibly change or modify those values. Fewer errors mean less time resolving errors, and more time focused on profitable projects for your firm.



7

Selecting a Technology Partner

While selecting the right technology for your firm is essential in making payroll a successful line of service, many firms find that their growth is significantly hindered by the support provided by their software partner.

During your evaluations, make sure they can demonstrate real resources, systems, and processes that, if needed, will help you quickly and accurately convert all your data from your previous platform. Conversion services and onboarding support will determine the speed at which you get up and running.

Also, take note of the ongoing service level the software company will commit to providing. After the agreement is signed and your firm is onboarded, the support from a software vendor will likely be limited to online help articles and live support overseas from representatives reading off a script. A technology partner will provide a dedicated consultant, in the U.S., an expert in payroll processing to help ensure your success long after you have been onboarded.

From training to onboarding, to software support and ongoing consultation, your payroll technology partner should provide the help you need to grow your business.



8

Make Payroll Profitable with IRIS

IRIS payroll solutions help simplify payroll for your firm. With decades of industry experience, we know what tools and resources you need to provide your clients with the service they have come to expect from you.

[Contact us](#) today and learn how our software solutions give you the tools to make payroll efficient, accurate, and profitable.



